

THE HOMILIST.

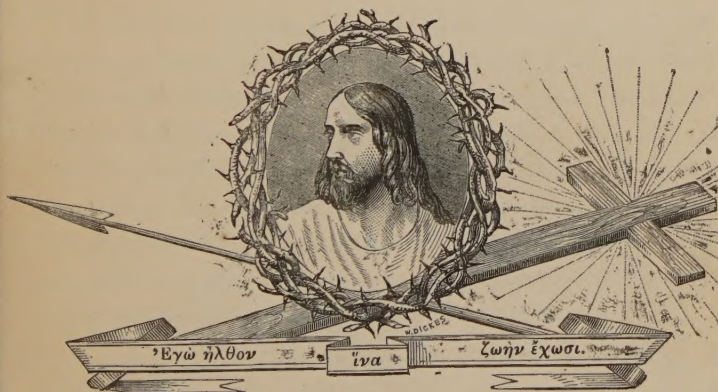
CONDUCTED BY

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"CORE OF CREEDS," "RESURRECTIONS," &c., &c.

VOL. IV. FOURTH SERIES.

VOLUME XXV. FROM COMMENCEMENT.



"THE LETTER KILLETH BUT THE SPIRIT GIVETH LIFE."—*Paul.*

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PREFACE.

THIS is the TWENTY-FIFTH volume of the HOMILIST, and the termination of the present series.*

As the old key-note will still rule the melodies of the HOMILIST, and no new specific description is requisite, the former preface may be again transcribed.

"First: The book has no *finish*. The Editor has not only not the time to give an artistic finish to his productions, but not even the *design*. Their incompleteness is *intentional*. He has drawn some marble slabs together, and hewn them roughly, but has left other hands to delineate minute features, and so polish them into beauty. He has dug up from the Biblical mine some precious ore, smelted a little, but left all the smithing to others. He has presented 'germs,' which, if sown in good soil, under a free air and an open sky, will produce fruit that may draw many famishing spirits into the vineyard of the Church.

"Secondly: The book has no *denominationalism*. It has no special reference to '*our* body,' or to '*our* Church.' As denominational strength is not necessarily *soul* strength, nor denominational religion necessarily the religion of humanity, it is the aim of the HOMILIST to minister that which universal man requires. It is for man as a citizen of the universe, and not for him as the limb of a sect.

"Thirdly: The book has no *polemical Theology*. The Editor—holding, as he does, with a tenacious grasp, the *cardinal* doctrines which constitute

* The next volume will be the commencement of "THE EDITOR'S SERIES." This series the Editor is determined (by the grace of Him who has helped him thus far, giving to his productions whatever merits they possess and good influence they exert) to make the BEST—the best in every sense.

what is called the 'orthodox creed'—has, nevertheless, the deep and ever-deepening conviction, first, that such creed is but a very small portion of the truth that God has revealed, or that man requires; and that no theological system can fully represent all the contents and suggestions of the great book of God; and, secondly, that systematic theology is but means to an end. *Spiritual morality is that end.* Consequently, to the heart and life every Biblical thought and idea should be directed. Your systems of divinity the author will not disparage; but his impression is, that they can no more answer the purpose of the Gospel than *pneumatics* can answer the purpose of the atmosphere. In the case of Christianity, as well as the air, the world can live without its scientific truths; but it must have the free flowings of their vital elements. Coleridge has well said, 'Too soon did the doctors of the Church forget that the heart—the moral nature—was the beginning and the end; and that truth, knowledge, and insight were comprehended in its expansion.'

"The Editor would record his grateful acknowledgments to those free spirits of all churches, who have so earnestly rallied round him, to the many who have encouraged him by their letters, and to those, especially, who have aided him by their valuable contributions. May the 'last day' prove that the help rendered has been worthily bestowed; and that the HOMILIST did something towards the spiritual education of humanity, in its endeavours to bring the Bible, through the instrumentality of the pulpit, into a more immediate and practical contact with the every-day life of man!"

DAVID THOMAS.

Loughborough Park, Brixton.

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All the articles in this volume are written by the Editor, with the exception of those which have a signature attached.

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A HOMILY

ON

Divine Forgiveness.

“Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.”—
Micah vii. 19.



ICAH, the author of this book, prophesied in the reign of Jothan, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, about seven hundred years before the birth of Christ. One of his predictions saved the life of Jeremiah, who would have been put to death for foretelling the destruction of the Temple, had it not been that Micah had done the same more than a hundred years before. Expositors have divided his book into two parts. The first part ending with the fifth chapter and beginning with the magnificent representation of the Almighty descending from his dwelling-place to judge the nations of the earth. The second part contains the last three chapters, and is a kind of dialogue between Jehovah and his people, in which the corruption of their morals is reproved, punishment threatened, and hopes held out for their ultimate political emancipation and divine forgiveness. His style, though

often obscure, through great conciseness and sudden transitions from one subject to another, has much in it that reminds us of the poetic beauty of Isaiah and nervous utterances of one of Israel's choicest seers.

The subject of the text is DIVINE FORGIVENESS, a subject which must ever be of paramount importance to mankind, who have "sinned and come short of the glory of God." Theology, which has thrown a haze over many of the bright things of revelation, has clouded this one of its most glorious orbs. Forgetting that the Bible is a popular book, using language in accommodation to our habits of thought and expression, it has constructed its theories upon the etymology of words. The truth and pertinancy of this remark will be seen, if at the outset we consider the very diversified forms in which the Bible represents to us the doctrine of divine forgiveness. Generally, indeed, I find it set forth under figures corresponding to the aspects in which sin stands before the mind of the writer. When, for example, sin appears as a *debt*, an unfulfilled obligation, then pardon is spoken of as a *cancelling*. Thus, in the 43rd chapter of Isaiah, Jehovah is represented as saying, "I, even I am He who blotteth out thy transgression;" and Peter, on the day of Pentecost, exhorts his vast auditory to "Repent, that their sins may be blotted out." When a man has paid his debts, or when some one else has discharged them, or when the creditor has freely forgiven them, he takes his pen in hand and strikes from the ledger both the name of the creditor and the amount. But sin is a debt in a very figurative sense, and therefore such representations of pardon must not be taken in a literal meaning. When sin appears as an *estrangement* from God, then forgiveness is represented as *reconciliation*. But as the estrangement is not mutual, it being exclusively on man's part, in the reconciliation there is no mutual change of mind. God cannot change, and need not change to be reconciled to the sinner. When sin appears as an *indict-*

ment, forgiveness is spoken of as *justification*. But justification can in the nature of the case have but a very remote resemblance to the forensic term as used by men. In civil justification, for instance, the charge has been found false, the accused demands justification as a right, and retires from the court with a high sense of insulted innocence. When sin appears as a *pollution*, then forgiveness is represented as a *cleansing*, hence we read of Christ's blood cleansing from all sin. But it is only in a very figurative sense that you can employ the word washing to mind, which is an invisible and impalpable substance. When sin appears as a *disease*, forgiveness is represented as a *healing*. "I will heal your backsliding." "I am come to bind up the broken hearted." When sin appears as something that stands between the soul and God, obstructing all loving fellowship, such as mountains, clouds, enemies, then forgiveness is spoken of as levelling the mountains and opening a highway for the soul to God, as dispersing the clouds, and bringing down the warm bright beams of Divine love upon the soul, as crushing the foes and burying them, as Pharaoh and his host were buried in the depths of the sea.

Now, disrobing the language of all such figurative terms, what are the simple ideas involved in it. I think there are three.

I. AN ANTECEDENT LIABILITY TO PUNISHMENT. All the terms imply something wrong, and the wrong is *moral*. It is crime, and crime must ever expose to punishment. The doctrine of human sinfulness not only runs through the whole Bible; it is abundantly revealed elsewhere. It is written in blood on every page of human history. It is acknowledged in the speculations of philosophy; it is proclaimed in the temples of heathendom; it rolls its thunders through the heavens of universal conscience. The fact meets us everywhere. In politics: the injustice, selfishness, and ambition of rulers, the ignorance and servility of citizens glare at us at every turn. In commerce: over-reach-

ing cupidities, fallacious representations of both the buyer and the seller are rife in all the markets of the world. In religion: the miserable exclusiveness of the sectarian, the grimaces of the hypocrite, the cant of the sentimentalist, the mummeries of the superstitious, the ignorance, the coldness and the indifference of all, are a grief and a burden to every enlightened and loyal disciple of Christ. Sin is too ubiquitous a presence, too operative a force amongst us, either to deny or ignore. It is a dark cloud on our sky, it begooms our path, it chills every breeze of life.

Now because of this *moral wrong* there must be a *liability* to punishment. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "The wages of sin is death." Apart from any positive infliction, sin carries with it its own punitive infliction. When it is finished it bringeth forth death. Who knows what this is? I know that there are terrible figures employed to represent the sinner's doom. I read of the "outer darkness," the "bottomless pit," the wrath of the Lamb, the undying worm, the inextinguishable flame, and before this terrific imagery I can only stand appalled, and exclaim, "O, wretched men that we are, who shall deliver us from this body of sin and death." Another simple idea involved in these figurative terms is—

II. THE EXERCISE OF A MERCIFUL PREROGATIVE. Forgiveness in a sovereign springs not from equity, but from compassion; not from justice, but from love. That God is disposed to forgive, I doubt not. His own declarations assure me of this. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, for He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will *abundantly* pardon." His provisions in Christ assure me of this. "Be it known unto you men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the

forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of Him which believeth in Jesus." His continuation of sinners in this world assures me of this. "Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power." To this, the great problem of man's moral history on this earth, here is the answer: "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering toward us and of great mercy."

There are especially two things in connection with the exercise of this pardoning prerogative which marks it off from its exercise in human governments.

First: *In human governments it is exercised with most cautious limitations.* Human sovereigns, however generous their natures, can only bestow pardon on a few out of numerous criminals. Were forgiveness to become general, the power of the government to maintain order would be weakened. There is no such limitation to the exercise of this prerogative in God. He offers pardon to *all*.

Secondly: *In human governments forgiveness is invariably valued by those to whom it is exercised.* What human criminal would not hail with rapturous gratitude pardon from a sovereign, so that he might have his chains struck off, the prison doors thrown open, and be allowed his old freedom of action and fellowship with men once more. But, alas, sinners feel not this in relation to the pardon that God offers. He presses it on them, but they will not accept it. "Who is a God like unto Thee that pardoneth iniquity," &c. He continues to offer His forgiveness to those who reject it over and over again. Another idea involved in these figurative terms is—

III. AN ACTUAL DELIVERANCE FROM ALL LIABILITY TO PUNITIVE SUFFERING. The forgiven man is delivered from punishment. The condemnation is removed, he is cleared, justified, and who is he that condemneth him? He had been liable to punishment; there was a prerogative to pardon, and that prerogative has been exercised, and he is free, and being free, he has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. He rejoices in hope.

There are, at least, two points of difference between this divine pardon and human forgiveness.

First: *In human forgiveness there is no guarantee against future criminality.* The prisoner pardoned by a human sovereign may be inspired by gratitude, and prompted, perhaps, to resolve upon a life of future obedience, and yet his heart remain unchanged. The principles that led to the crime may still be in him, and, being there, they may break forth again. But in divine forgiveness it is not so. The pardoned man is a changed man; he has a "new heart" put within him—a heart inspired with such love to the Sovereign as will secure a joyous and constant obedience.

Secondly: *Human forgiveness can never put the criminal in such a good position as he held before his transgression.* He has his freedom as before, but he has not his self-respect, he has not the same standing in society, his contemporaries will never look upon him in the same light again. Some will shun him, others will suspect him, and few will venture to give him their confidence, and their love. But in divine forgiveness the criminal is raised to a higher status even than that of innocence. I know not whether the angels would have been his servants had he never fallen, but after his forgiveness they become so. They rejoice with him on his conversion, they cheer him on his pilgrimage, they bear him on their pinions to their heavenly scenes. He is brought into an "innumerable company of angels." I know not what relations man would have entered into with his Maker had he never sinned, but I know that he would never have

had what the pardoned sinner has, the honour of seeing his Maker in the person of Jesus on the throne of the universe, gazed on by every eye, and worshipped by every heart.

Such, then, are the ideas involved in pardon. Forgiveness is *deliverance from sin and its penal consequences*. And how strong is the imagery employed in the Bible to represent the *completeness* of this deliverance. It is as the "blotting out of a thick cloud." See that dark mass of cloud up yonder, how it hides the sun, and chills the air. A breeze has sprung up, and it is gone—the sky is azure, the scene is bright, and the flowing air warm with life. That cloud shall never come again, no more shall thy sins. It is as the throwing of them behind God. "Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." Who knows where the back of God is? I see His face in nature. His smiles are the beauty of the world. I see His face in Jesus—"the brightness of His glory." But where is His back? It is the fathomless abyss of nothingness. It is a separation as far as the east from the west. Tell me the distance from the east to the west, and I will tell you the distance which the pardoned sinner is from his sin. "It is a casting of them in the depths of the sea." Not on the shore, to be washed by the incoming waves, but into "the depths." Into the abysses of some mighty Atlantic, where no storms shall stir them up, no trump shall wake them from their graves. "In those days, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and shall not be found." But where are they buried? In the forgetfulness of infinite love. "*I will remember their sin no more.*" Can Infinite Intelligence forget? Yes, and His forgetfulness is one of the radiant attributes of His character. Does not all true forgiveness involve forgetfulness? Those who say they forgive and cannot forget lack the faculty of forgiveness; as yet Heaven has not endowed them with the power of granting absolution. It is of the very nature of love to hide injuries. Charity covereth sins. God has the power of forgetting

injuries, because He is LOVE. I see the power of love, in hiding injuries, working everywhere in nature. The sea hastens to cover up the wounds which ruthless ships have ploughed into its noble bosom; the tree bleeding with the sores which the woodman has inflicted loses no time in its efforts to conceal the marks of violence it has received. Day by day it goes on until the year comes round when, amidst its luxurious foliage, you look in vain for the old scars. And thus, as the waves of the sea and the flowing sap, love ever works. It hastens to cover up from the eye of memory the injuries it has received. How soon the love of a wife buries in forgetfulness any injuries she has received from the man she loves too well. The countless pains which the thoughtlessness and waywardness of children in their early days inflict upon the parental heart are soon buried in the sea of parental love. Love digs in the heart of parents a grave for the wrongs and builds a museum for the virtues of their children. All this is of God, is God-like. Infinite LOVE "passeth by the transgression." He leaves it behind Him as He proceeds in the majesty of His goodness to diffuse wider and wider for ever the blessedness of His own being.



FORGIVENESS.

A GERMAN prince, travelling through France, visited the Arsenal at Toulon, where the galleys were kept. The commandant, as a compliment to his rank, offered to set at liberty any slave whom he selected. The prince went the round of the prison, therefore, and conversed with the prisoners. He inquired into the reason of their confinement, and met only with universal complaints of injustice, oppression, and false accusation. At last he came to one man who admitted his imprisonment to be just. "My lord," said he "I have no reason to complain. I have been a wicked, desperate wretch. I have often deserved to be broken upon the wheel, and it is a mercy that I am here." The prince fixed his eyes upon the man, and without hesitation selected him, saying, "This is the man whom I wish released."

"I believe in the forgiveness of sin,"—the article of the creed which brought peace to Luther's troubled mind when seeking the way of salvation. "Oh, my sins! my sins!" was his cry, almost of despair, from which, however, he was greatly relieved by the good counsel and comforting advice of Staupitz. But the work was not yet finished. One day all his fears and terrors had returned, when an old monk entered his cell, and Luther opened his heart to him. The venerable old man was unable to follow his soul in all its doubts as Staupitz had done, but he knew Credo, and found much consolation in it for his own heart; so he repeated to Luther the cheering article, "*I believe in the forgiveness of sins.*" These simple words diffused great consolation in Luther's mind. From that moment light sprang up in his rejoicing heart.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

OUR PURPOSE.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this TEHILIM, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character, and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) ANNOTATIONS of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The ARGUMENT of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The HOMILETICS of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately educed, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

SUBJECT: *The Cry of the Soul for Justice, Mercy, and Perfection.*

(Continued from Page 336.)

I. HERE IS A CRY FOR JUSTICE. “Hear the right, O Lord.” Hear, O Jehovah, the right. The prayer for justice may be regarded as extending to the seventh verse. In this prayer for justice we discover several things in the mind of David.

First: *A sense of truthfulness.* “Give ear unto my prayer that goeth not out to feigned lips.” He was conscious that there was no discrepancy between his speech and his spirit. His words were the exponents of his soul. The man, unless he feels that he is *sincere*, will never dare to appeal to heaven for justice. Whilst insincerity is a sin, sincerity is not necessarily a *virtue*. Virtuous sincerity requires that there should be not only an exact correspondence between the speech and spirit, but an exact correspondence between the

spirit and eternal realities. Another thing which we discover in his mind, is—

Secondly : *A desire for the divine verdict.* “Let my sentence come forth from my presence.” Saul, his enemy, would not do him justice ; he had by his conduct given out a false impression concerning him, and hence he appeals to righteous heaven to give sentence. To Saul’s own face he had said, “The Lord judge between me and thee.” (1 Sam. xxiv. 12.) The righteous judge often pronounces an acquittal upon the innocent even now. He brings about events and gives them a tongue to pronounce the words “NOT GUILTY.” The patriarch of Uz firmly believed that the time would come when his VINDICATOR would appear and pronounce him right : “I know that my Redeemer liveth,” &c. The human soul everywhere holds that there is justice at the head of the universe, and that it will sooner or later vindicate the right. Another thing which we discover in his mind is—

Thirdly : *A consciousness of a divine searching.* “Thou hast proved mine heart.” He knew that the Omniscient eye had searched him through and through, and that he was innocent of the allegations of his enemies. Of course he could not feel that the all-searching eye could not detect anything morally wrong in his soul. He would be more than an unfallen angel to feel this. But what he felt was that the Omniscient would not detect any of those faults for which he was charged by enemies. “Thou shalt find nothing,” that is, nothing in me to justify the treatment of mine enemy. A man may be deeply conscious of his imperfection before God, and yet conscious of his innocence of the charges brought against him by man. Another thing which we discover in his mind—

Fourthly : *Is a determination to be blameless in his speech.* “I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.” What he means is, I will utter nothing that is wrong concerning my enemies, nothing that can justify their harsh and cruel

conduct. Their conduct and their language shall not provoke me to expressions that transgress the laws of rectitude. "I will take heed to my ways that I sin not with my tongue." Speech is a mighty power. A word can set a nation in flames, hence the government of the tongue is of all duties the most urgent. Another thing which we discover in his mind is,

Fifthly : *An assurance of divine protection.* "Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." (1.) He was protected from ruin. "The works of men," the doings of his enemies were all directed to his ruin. Their paths were the paths of the destroyer. Nothing less than his ruin did they seek. (2.) He was protected by God. "By the word of Thy lips." The divine directions and counsels had enabled him to avoid the plotted ruin. (3.) He was protected by God in connection with his own agency. "I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." God's agency in connection with man's deliverance neither supersedes the necessity nor interferes with the freedom of human effort. To avoid the paths of the destroyer we must attend to the word of "THY lips." Another thing which we discover in his mind is—

Sixthly : *A dread of falling from rectitude.* "Hold up my goings in Thy paths that my footsteps slip not." This means (1) I am right as far as mine enemies are concerned at present. I am conscious of no wrong. (2.) I am anxious to retain my blamelessness. I would not that their animosities should provoke me to wrong. (3.) To retain my blamelessness I need *Thy* help. "Hold up my goings in Thy path that my footsteps slip not." I am like a child in leading strings, I cannot run alone. I shall stumble and fall if *Thou* withdrawest *Thy* sustaining hand. A deep and practical sense of our dependence upon God is essential to our safety. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed," &c. Another thing which we discover in his mind is—

Seventhly : *A confidence that God will attend to his prayer.* "I have called upon thee, for Thou wilt hear me, O God : incline Thine ear unto me, and hear my speech." The meaning of this is, I have invoked Thee heretofore and do so still, because I know that Thou wilt hear. He had the fullest assurance that God would hear his prayer.

Such was David's state of heart when he cried to heaven for *justice*. A cry to heaven for justice is the breath of injured innocence. Oppressed humanity the world over and the ages through turn its eyes with imploring looks to heaven for justice. "Traverse the earth—enter the gorgeous cities of idolatry, or accept the hospitality of its wandering tribes—go where will-worship is most fantastic and superstition most gross—and you will find in man, 'A fearful looking for of judgment.' The mythology of their Nemesis may vary—their Elysium and Tartarus may be differently depicted—the metempsychosis may be the passage of bliss and woe—still the fact is only confirmed by the diversity of the forms in which it is presented." This universal feeling implies the eternal fact, that there is justice at the head of things, that will one day balance all human accounts. Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? The judgment day revealed in Holy Writ is a response to the cry of humanity for justice. Then every man that shall receive according to that he hath done whether it be good or bad.

II. HERE IS A CRY FOR MERCY. "Show thy marvellous loving kindness." The cry for mercy extends from the seventh to the fifteenth verse. The prayer seems to be for *special* mercy. This prayer may be divided into two sections.

First : *A prayer for a protection from enemies.* And here two things are to be observed. (1.) The *character* in which he appeals to God for protection. (a) He appeals to Him as a mighty Saviour. "O Thou that savest by Thy right hand." The right hand is the hand of power, the hand with which we are most able to direct our purposes. Jehovah

is mighty to save. (b) He appeals to Him as a mighty Saviour for those who trust in Him. "Them which put their trust in thee." Salvation is contingent on faith. No one is saved but he who trusts in the Saviour. (2.) The manner in which he desired protection. (a) *Tenderly*. "Keep me as the apple of the eye." Watch tenderly over me. (b) *Securely*. "Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings." The young eaglets under the wing of their mother are well guarded. The pinion of the parent must be broken before they can be injured. As an eagle stirs up her nest, flutters over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings, so the Lord alone will lead him. So frail are we that we require, on God's part, the *tenderest* treatment. He must deal with us with all the delicacy with which the oculists treats the pupil of the diseased eye. This we are assured He will do. He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. (3.) The enemies from whom he sought protection. (a) They were wicked. "The wicked that oppress me." They were men morally bad. (b) They were deadly. "My deadly enemies." Their malignity desired nothing less than his destruction. (c) They were numerous. They compassed me about. They surround me on all hands. (d) They were hardened. "They are inclosed in their own fat." Fat stands for insensitiveness. (e) They were haughty. With their mouth they speak proudly. They set their mouth against the heavens. (f) They were determined. "They have set their eyes bowing down to the earth." As the eyes of the hunter taking aim at the animal on the ground, so their eyes are on me intent on my ruin. (g) They were ferocious. "Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey." They are craving to tear me to pieces. (h) *Cunning*. "Lurking in secret places." As the lion crouches down and lies in wait for its victim, so they are on the watch for me. (i) Fools. "Which is thy sword." "Which are thy hand, O Lord." The good

are the agents of God, the wicked the instruments; the one serve Him by their will, the other against their will. (*j*) *Worldly*. Men of the world which have their portion in this life." This life is everything to them. They have nothing beyond this mortal state. This is their only heaven. (*k*) *Prosperous*. Whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure:" they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes." They have not only abundance for themselves, but sufficient to enrich their children when they are gone.

Such were his enemies, wicked, deadly, numerous, prosperous, haughty, determined, ferocious, cunning, divine instruments, thoroughly wordly, secularly prosperous. These enemies in all these respects resemble for the most part the spiritual enemies with which all human souls have to contend, and from them God alone can deliver us. David in the midst of them cried for *mercy*. His cry for mercy is as deep and universal as that for justice. Men feel their need, feel their guilt and danger, and they cry for mercy. The cry implies the glorious fact that there is mercy—Mercy for humanity, boundless, shoreless, infinite mercy for sinners. Yes, there is.

"Say not that any crime of man
Was e'er too great to be forgiven:
Can we within our little span
Engrasp the viewless mind of Heav'n?
Shall we attempt with puny force
To lash back ocean with a rod?
Arrest the planets in their course?
Or weigh the mercies of a God?
Our mercies, like ourselves, may be
Small, finite, and ungracious ever;
May spurn a brother's bended knee,—
But God forsakes the contrite never!
Vast as Himself they shine above,
To eyes that look through sorrow's tears;
Great though the crime, great is the love,
If those who seek it are sincere."

III. HERE IS A CRY FOR PERFECTION. "As for me, I will (or let me) behold Thy face in righteousness." The utterance is undoubtedly a prayer. Three facts may be deduced from the words.

First: *That the death of the good is an awaking from sleep.* The best of men are scarcely awake here. The Apostle felt this when he said: "It is high time to awake out of sleep." He was speaking to Christians (1.) There is much spiritual *torpor*, even in the best. Where is that earnest activity which we feel is the right thing for us? The activity which Christ had when He said: "I must work, &c." What Paul had, who said, "I count not my life dear, &c." "I press towards the mark, &c." (2.) There is much spiritual *dreaming* in the best. Our views of divine things are often only as the incoherent visions of a dream. At death, the soul wakes up. It is a morning to it; a bright, joyous, stirring morning. Do not be afraid of death, then, my brethren.

Secondly: *In this awaking at death, there will be the complete assimilation of the soul to God.* "When I wake with Thy likeness." What is this likeness? Not a resemblance to His wisdom, power, or sovereignty, but a resemblance to His *governing disposition*: LOVE. Moral likeness to a being consists in a likeness to his *ruling* disposition. Variety in material objects, and mental characteristics is the glory of the creation. But similarity in *moral* disposition is what Heaven demands, as the essence of virtue and the condition of bliss. All can love, and to love is to be like God. At death, that in the good becomes perfect. Our sympathies will then flow entirely with his, our wills will then go entirely within the circle of his.

Thirdly: *In this assimilation will consist the everlasting satisfaction of our nature.* "I shall be satisfied." There is no satisfaction without this. (1.) The spiritual powers will not work harmoniously under the dominion of any other disposition. (2.) The conscience will frown upon any other

state of mind. (3.) The Great One will not bless with His friendship any other state of mind in His creatures. Likeness to God is likeness to His controlling disposition. His controlling disposition is *disinterested love*, and this disinterested love is that well which springs up to everlasting life."*

JUSTICE, MERCY, AND PERFECTION. For these human souls everywhere, and through all times, have been crying for. What the soul wants exists, and exists in God.

A Homiletic Glance at the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians.

The student is requested to keep in mind the following things, which will throw much light upon the Epistle. First: The circumstances of the writer when he wrote. He was a prisoner in Rome. During his residence there, in "his own hired house" (Acts xxviii. 30, 31), from the spring A.D. 61 to 63, he wrote the Epistles to the Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and to the Ephesians. It is generally supposed that this Epistle to the Ephesians was the first he wrote during his imprisonment. Secondly: The circumstances of the persons addressed. They lived, it is thought, in Ephesus, an illustrious city in the district of Ionia, nearly opposite the island of Samos, and about the middle of the western coast of the peninsula commonly called Asia Minor. It had attained in Paul's day such a distinction as in popular estimation to be identified with the whole of the Roman province of Asia. It was the centre of the worship of the great goddess Diana. Paul resided here on two different occasions. The first, A.D. 54, for a very short period (Acts xviii. 19—21); the second, for a period of more than two years. The persons therefore addressed in this letter are those whom he had converted from paganism, and in whom he felt all the interest of a spiritual father. Thirdly: The purpose of the letter. The aim of the Epistle seems to be to set forth the origin and development of the Church of Christ, and to impress those Ephesian Christians, who lived under the shadow of the great temple of Diana, with the unity and beauty of a temple transcendently more glorious. For the minute critical exegesis of this apostolic encyclical, we direct our readers to the commentaries of Alford, Webster and Wilkinson, Jowett, Harless, Stier, Eadie, Hodge, and last, though not least, Ellicott. Our aim will be to draw out, classify, and set in homiletic order, the Divine ideas reached by the critical aid of such distinguished scholars.

SUBJECT: *Symptoms of Moral Madness.*

"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind. Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. Who being past feeling, have

* See HOMILIST, vol. iii., second series, p. 210.

given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."—Eph. iv. 17—19.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 17.*—"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord." "Therefore," οὖν, resumes the monitory strain from which the writer has several times digressed. (See Chapters ii. 11; iii. 1; iv. 1.) Webster and Wilkinson—I bear witness, μαρτύρομαι. "In the Lord," ἐν Κυρίῳ. This indicates the character and office of the writer as the inspired apostle of Jesus Christ. "That ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind." Or, as Ellicott renders the words, "That ye must no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind." *Mind, νοῦς*, in this passage does not refer to the intellect to the exclusion of the feelings, nor to the feelings to the exclusion of the intellect. It includes both: the reason, the understanding, the conscience, the affections, are all comprehended by the term. Sometimes one and sometimes another of these modes of spiritual activity is specially referred to, but in the present case the whole soul is intended."
—Hodge.

Ver. 18.—"Having the understanding darkened." ἐσκοτισμένοι τῇ διανοίᾳ, —being darkened in their understanding. "Being alienated from the life of God." "The life of God," ζωῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ. All life is of God. The apostle here evidently refers to the life of holiness, the true spiritual life of the soul, which is indeed supreme sympathy with God. "Because of the blindness of their heart." Because of the hardness of their heart. The idea is, that they were estranged from God because of the ignorance which was in them, owing to the callousness of their heart.

Ver. 19.—"Who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." "Who, as men past feeling have given themselves over to wantonness, for the working of all manner of uncleanness in greediness."—Ellicott.

HOMILETICS.—In these verses the Christians at Ephesus are warned against the course of life pursued by the Gentiles, whom he describes as the prey of mental delusion, benighted in intellect, unbridled in licentiousness. Our subject is—*Symptoms of Moral Madness.*

WHAT is "vanity of mind" in a Scriptural sense? Not mere mental fatuity. *ματαιότης*, vanity, includes moral worthlessness and corruption. Sin is folly, and sinners are justly represented as fools. It is said of the Prodigal Son, that "when he came to himself," he began to inquire. A sinner is not himself. "We learn for the first time," says Dr. Arnot, "that the man has been mad, by learning that his reason is restored. It is a characteristic of the insane that they never know or confess their insanity until it has passed away: it is when he has "come to himself" that he first discovers he has been

beside himself. The two beings to whom a man living in sin is most a stranger, are himself and God : when the right mind returns, he becomes acquainted with both again. The first act of the prodigal when light dawned on his darkness, was to converse with himself, and the second to return to his father." We learn from these verses that this moral madness is associated with several things.

I. WITH AN INTELLECT WITHOUT TRUE LIGHT. There are two expressions here indicating the state of a sinner's intellect. "Understanding darkened," and "ignorance that is in them." When we say that the sinner's intellect is in the dark, we mean, of course, in respect to the spiritual realities and interests of his being. He may have the light of poetic fancy, and of secular intelligence—the stars of general science may beam on his horizon ; but so far as moral light is concerned, he is in the dark. His eyes are blinded. Three things show this :—

First : His adoption of the *partial* to the rejection of the *complete* in enjoyment. He has *sensual* pleasures, but these pleasures even in their highest measure constitute but an infinitesimal portion of those enjoyments for which human nature craves, and for which it is organized. The pleasures of holy loves, devout meditations, sublime fellowships, and uplifting hopes and aims. Is not the man mad who choseth the partial and rejects the complete?

Secondly : His adoption of the *fleeting* to the rejection of the *enduring* in enjoyment. The pleasures and dignities he strives after are all connected with this life, which in its longest periods is brief, and its securest conditions uncertain. What is our life ? "A vapour." All is flowing as a stream, all is transient as a dream. The joys and honours of *immortality* he practically ignores and rejects. Is not this madness ?

Thirdly : His adoption of the *ruinous* to the rejection of the *restorative* in enjoyment. By the adoption of the partial and the fleeting to the rejection of the complete and permanent, he pursues a course that involves the ruin of himself, the utter loss of all good. Are not these facts sufficient to show the darkness of the sinner's mind, and the dense ignorance that reigns within him ? This moral madness is associated—

II. WITH A SOUL WITHOUT THE TRUE GOD. "Alienated from the life of God." No soul, no creature in the world can live a moment without God. "By him we live, and move, and have our being." Yet there is a solemn sense in which moral beings can and do live aloof from Him, live without Him. Sinners are "*without God*" in the world. "He is not in all their thoughts." They shut him out from the whole sphere of their feelings, thoughts, and activities. Not only do they practically ignore His presence and His claims, but His very existence. They are *without God*. Practical atheists. Is not this moral madness?

First: Is it not moral madness to shut the eye to the *greatest object* in the universe?—One compared with whom the creation itself is as nothing.

Secondly: Is it not moral madness to disregard the *most absolute Master* of our destiny?—the One Being in whose hand our breath is?—One whose very word can make for us an eternal hell or heaven.

Thirdly: Is it not moral madness to have no sympathy with the *Best Being* in existence?—the fountain of all love, truth, and blessedness. This moral madness is associated—

III. WITH A HEART WITHOUT TRUE SENSIBILITY. "Blindness, hardness of their heart." "Past feeling." This insensibility, whilst it has been brought about by moral irrationality and ignorance, re-acts, deepens the darkness of the understanding, and intensifies the folly of the soul. When the man's heart gets so hardened as to be "past feeling," he becomes utterly incapable of taking right views of spiritual things. The impure atmosphere of a corrupt and hardened heart will obscure the vision of the intellect. When the heart is "past feeling," man becomes so stupid in intellect as to be utterly incapable of seeing the beauty, or feeling the force of spiritual truth.

First: To be "past feeling" is to be past the power of *true improvement*. Where there is no feeling, there is no *pain*, and where there is no pain there will be no impulse for the search of a remedy. A bodily disease without pain is the most hopeless, and a moral disease without pain must prove fatal. "Past feeling." The moral heart run to "fat."

Secondly: To be "past feeling" is to be past the power of

true enjoyment. There is no pleasure without feeling. This moral madness is associated—

IV. WITH A LIFE WITHOUT TRUE VIRTUE. “Given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.” The passage includes two things:—

First: *A voluntary abandonment to sin.* “Given themselves over unto lasciviousness,” &c. Having lost spiritual intelligence, God, and sensibility, the soul abandons itself to moral corruption. It does it voluntarily.” “*Given themselves.*” They are not forced by God or the devil. What a sight! Souls made in the image of God plunging into a hideous, sunless, lifeless, lawless chaos.

Secondly: *An avaricious appetite for sin.* “With greediness.” The word “*greediness*” elsewhere means covetousness—a desire to have more.

CONCLUSION.—Learn—First: *That a clear intellect requires a clean heart.* Secondly: *That a clean heart requires a vital connection with God.* Religion is essential to a sound intellect.*



MORAL MADNESS.

BODILY disease or injury, in the great majority of cases, manifests its presence by pain: so obtrudes itself on our consciousness, that it is impossible for the sick man to be long unaware of his danger, or indifferent to its removal. But it is the peculiar characteristic of moral disease that it does its deadly work in secret. Sin is a malady which affects the very organ by which itself can be detected; it creates the darkness amid which it injures us, and blinds the eye of its victim in the very act of destroying him. If there be any bodily disease to which it is analogous, it is that fatal malady which often cheats the sick man into a delusive tranquillity, the deeper and more deceitful in proportion to his danger. And if the unconscious cheerfulness of the dying be sometimes both strange and sad, if it has ever happened to us, as we looked on the wan and wasted countenance on which consumption had set its ghastly seal, to listen with mingled wonder and pity to the words of unabated hopefulness from the sick man's lips, surely more deserving of our pity is he, who, all unaware of his spiritual diseases, is hastening on, in undisturbed tranquillity and self-satisfaction, to everlasting despair and death!—CAIRD.

They sleep most soundly who have most need to be wakeful. The cold which is ready to congeal life in the fountains, arrests the activity which is necessary to preserve life. The serpent charms into stillness the bird that he is about to devour. The guilt which brings upon a man God's displeasure so stupefies the senses of the man that he is not aware of danger, and does not try to escape.—ARNOT.

Germs of Thought.

SEMINAL SKETCHES OF DISCOURSES ON CHRIST'S LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA MINOR.

By the late Rev. CALEB MORRIS, being condensed notes of a sermon taken
down in short-hand when preached.

(No. VI.)

SUBJECT : *Christ's Letter to the Church at Sardis.*

“And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; ‘These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.’”—Rev. iii. 1—6.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Forty-third.

SARDIS was a city of ancient Lydia. It lies about 30 miles S.E. of Thyatira. It is now a miserable village, and one of the stopping places of the Persian caravans. The original city was planted by Cyrus, and afterwards desolated by an earthquake. The ruins of it are still to be seen. At present it consists of a few mud huts, inhabited by ignorant Turks. Everything seems as if it had been cursed by heaven, and under the dominion of Satan. A modern traveller says: “I sat beneath the sky of Asia to gaze upon the ruins of Sardis from the banks of the golden-sanded Pactolus. Beside me were the cliffs of that Acropolis which, centuries before, the hardy Median scaled while leading on the conquering Persians, whose tents had covered the very spot on which I was reclining. Before me were the vestiges of what had been the palace of the

gorgeous Cræsus. Within its walls were once congregated the wisest of mankind—Thales, Cleobulus, and Solon. Far in the distance were the gigantic tumuli of the Lydian monarch, and around them spread those very plains once trodden by the countless hosts of Xerxes, when hurrying on to find a sepulchre at Marathon. But all, all had passed away ! There were before me the fanes of a dead religion, the tombs of forgotten monarchs, and the palm tree that waved in the banquet halls of kings.”

The subject which this letter brings prominently under the notice is *spiritual life*; that is the spiritual life of the soul; and this subject appears in three aspects.

I. IN A STATE OF ADVANCED DECAY. In the first verse the Church here is represented as only having life in name. “Thou hast a *name* that thou livest and are dead.” Sad state this; the life of many professed Christians is merely nominal, the ghastly skeleton is padded into the form and painted with the hues of life. The next verse, however, shows that the expression “dead” is to be taken in a comparative sense, for there were spiritual things which remained though they were “ready to die.” Three things may be suggested concerning this state.

First: It is a *sad* state. “Things ready to die.” What things are these? The greatest things in the universe—eternal principles of virtue and truth. What “*things*” are comparable to these? To them literatures, markets, governments, are puerilities. There is a spiritual consumption, and the symptoms are manifest. Weakness, morbid appetites, false views of self. People in bodily consumption generally believe they are well, so here, &c.

Secondly: It is a *recoverable* state. This is implied by the exhortation. “Be watchful,” &c. Four things are enjoined (1.) Watchfulness. “Be watchful.” Take care that the remaining sparks do not go out, guard off fresh attacks. (2.) Cherishment. Strengthen the things that remain. Give them wholesome air, nourishment, exercise. (3.) Reproduction. “Remember, therefore, how thou hast seen and heard.” Call up all the good of the past and hold it fast. (4.) Reformation. “And repent.” Renounce all that is pernicious to spiritual health, and pursue the sanitary and the invigorating.

Thirdly : It is a *perilous* state. "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief." The figure is familiar to us both in the Gospels and the Epistles (Matt. xxiv. 43; Luke xii. 39; 1 Thess. v. 2; 2 Peter iii. 10). Spiritual life is here presented to us—

II. IN A STATE OF CONSIDERABLE PERFECTION. "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments," &c. Though the spiritual life of most of the members of the Church was in a decaying state, in the case of a few it was not so. Notice,

First : The *description* of those. (1.) "They have not defiled their garments." "They kept themselves unspotted from the world." There was much moral filth in the city, yet they walked its streets with unsoiled garments. Man might keep himself pure in the midst of impurities. The corruption of our towns and our own circles is no justification for the corruption of our own souls. The soul has a divine power of abstraction, and the power of holding fellowship with the Father of lights. (2.) They are worthy. Who are the worthy in the sight of God? Those only who have moral worth. Secular wealth and intellectual opulence add no real worth to man; real worth is supreme sympathy with the supremely good.

Secondly : The *blessedness* of those. "Walk with me in white." What does this mean? (1.) Fellowship with Christ. (2.) Progress with Christ. O the glory of moving ever on with Christ! Spiritual life is here presented to us—

III. IN A STATE OF TRIUMPHANT POWER. "He that overcometh the same shall be clothed in white raiment." Spiritual life here has its antagonists; they are numerous, malignant, crafty, and ever active. These, by the grace of God, it can conquer. And when the conquest is won, how great the glory! Here is

First : *The glory of heavenly purity.* "White garments." The time will come when the genuine soul will stand in celestial scenes "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." Here is—

Secondly : *The glory of an everlasting citizenship.* "I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life." In the heavenly city he shall have a permanent place, his name shall never be erased from God's register of happy souls. Whose names are

now on that roll? Not all, we fear, who are registered in church books. Here is—

Thirdly: *The glory of the highest acknowledgment.* “I will confess his name before my Father, and his angels.” What an honour, to be acknowledged as the friend of Christ before the face of God, and His holy angels!*



THE BYEWAYS OF THE BIBLE.—No. XIX.

SUBJECT: *Martyr-Worship and Persecution.*

“Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers.”—Luke xi. 48.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Forty-fourth.

IF we may judge from the silence of preachers and commentaries respecting this Scripture, it appears to be to many persons a practically unprofitable passage. They do not deny its truth; but they do not perceive it; and they treat the words, therefore, very much as an unlearned reader treats any quotation in one of the learned languages which may occur in his reading. He just looks for a moment at the strange words or unknown characters; he wonders and wishes for a little about their possible signification; and then he passes on in despair.

But this is an unworthy course, is it not? Is it not rather the path of Christian courage, of true faith in the divinity of Scripture, and of that genuine humility which dares anything with God's help, to look every such perplexity in the face. In dependence, therefore, on that help, let us endeavour to show in these words, First, the General Principle which appears to underlie them; and Secondly, its Particular Application in this case. We shall learn valuable truth, if not the exact truth, I confidently hope, in this way.

* In consequence of the very imperfect notes of this discourse, the Editor has felt it necessary to modify the arrangement and supply some suggestive points.

I. THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE appears this, that the very same cause, or influence, or feeling, will often produce in different circumstances exactly antagonistic results. Examples in nature are abundant. The same heat which melts the hard ice, hardens the soft clay ; the same wind which brings the rain, often blows it away ; the same influences which promote growth, afterwards lead to decay. The ancients understood this principle when they spoke of Time as devouring his own children. The engineer acts upon it when he demands as great a distance to reduce the speed of his train as he employed to produce it,—it being exactly the same property of matter which resists stopping when in motion, and which resists starting when at rest. The physician, again, exemplifies this same principle when he heals a sick man by the very drugs which would be fatal to sound health ; and the familiar proverb which says, that “one man’s food is another man’s poison,” expresses much the same truth. All these (and they are only a few, of course, out of thousands) are physical illustrations ; but there are those of a higher kind, too. Thus the same spirit of confidence which, in certain natures encourages and ensures what is honourable and generous, is only like a door of opportunity to other natures to be guilty of the dishonourable and the mean. The greater your trust in some persons, the more they endeavour to deserve it ; in others, the more they abuse it. So the same afflictions which soften some natures, exasperate others ; and the very trial which leads this man to submit, only causes that man to rebel. Even the great message of the Gospel itself, with all its wealth both of mercy and of power, is no exception to this rule ; for, with some, as we read, it is the savour of life unto life ; and, with others, of death unto death. The greater, indeed, the energy of the cause, the greater is this possible diversity of effects ; where it does not cure, there it kills.

Take one other example under this head, by way of transition to the next. What two things can appear more opposed than flattery and mocking ? Yet they are but different branches from one stem. The one is open insult, no doubt, and the other is loud praise ; the one is conveyed in bitter language, and the other in sweet ; the one is trying to any man, the other, to most of us, very pleasant ; the one we always avoid, if we can, but

the other, too often, we pursue. Yet these differences are only apparent, and on the surface, whereas the resemblance is real and profound. For neither of the two is consistent with real respect or true love; and both are the offspring, if not of hatred, of inward indifference and contempt. When a person flatters you, what does he do? He offers you an amount of praise as to your character, abilities, or person, which he considers either that you do not really deserve, or else that you ought not to desire. He says what is fulsome, or false, if not both; and he expects you, in consequence, to be pleased. Is that treating you with respect? How foolish, or vain, or dishonest, he must believe you to be in his heart! How vain, to be so gratified by his praises! How foolish, to swallow them! How dishonest, to accept them as your due! Could he have shown greater contempt for you by any amount of mocking? or greater hatred and ill-will? Why does he flatter you in this way? Not simply in order to please you, but to expose your supposed vanity or folly; or to lead you into the commission of evil; or to employ you, in some way, as his tool. Think of the profound treachery, therefore, of which he is guilty in it all; and then tell me if the bitterest mocker is any worse in his way.

II. THE APPLICATION of the general principle which we have thus endeavoured to illustrate is the point which comes next. Two things which seem exactly opposite are referred to in our text—the behaviour of the Pharisees to the memory of the prophets, and the behaviour of their forefathers to the prophets themselves. Their forefathers had habitually ill-treated the prophets and despised them, if not killed them, as a rule (see Acts vii. 52; Jer. ii. 30); the children honoured and magnified them, and treated the sepulchres they reposed in as the chief glories of the land. “Your fathers killed the prophets, and ye build their sepulchres.” The same men were malefactors in one age and martyrs in the other. It looked like an entire disavowal of the deeds of the past; it was distinctly intended, indeed, to be as much. (See Matt. xxiii. 30.) Yet we find in our text, that this disavowal is distinctly disallowed, and that these two contrary lines of behaviour are attributed to one cause—a thing which need not surprise us after what we have been considering.

This is the first step in the application of our general principle to our text : there is no greater variance in this instance than in any of the illustrations above named. On this ground alone, therefore, there is no difficulty in believing the same of as of them : it is perfectly in accordance with all analogy for our Lord's statement to be correct.

But is it not possible to go deeper, and discover the common cause in this case ? I think we may suggest this, to begin, viz., that the persons concerned followed, in both cases, the fashion of their day ; they were precisely alike on this point. The men who persecuted the prophets, and the men who garnished their sepulchres, did not swim against the stream, but with it. Most Israelites in the days of the prophets had persecuted and ill-used them ; most Israelites in the days of our Saviour paid respect to their tombs ; the two classes, therefore, which He is comparing together had gone with the multitude in each case. It was the stream which had changed, not they.

Futhermore, the stream had only changed as to its temporary direction, not as to its final issue, or its source. The fashion followed by these contrasted generations had been a carnal fashion in each case. The older generations had killed the prophets because they reproved them for idolatry ; the younger approached very close to making idols of their names. The one had loved idolatry because it did not interfere with their sins ; the other was addicted to formalism from the very same cause ; the one had opposed the truth, the other corrupted it ; the one had borrowed idols, the other invented them ; one magnified the dead heroes of other countries (for such, in fact, were the gods of the heathen), the other the dead prophets of their own. When they cried out, therefore, against the sins of their fathers they were showing the very spirit they decried—as was abundantly verified afterwards by the death of our Lord Himself, and by the many martyrdoms of the early Church.

The whole subject teaches us, first, not to judge by appearances only. All is not acceptable zeal that looks so. There are other things that glitter besides gold. There are other wings than those of angels. (1 John. iv. 1.)

Let us learn, next, to distrust every system that forbids us to examine for ourselves. I can understand the anxiety of some

men to call themselves priests in an unlawful sense of the word ; but I cannot so well understand their hearers being willing to submit to it. "Do not dare to sin against me, your pastor and master," said such a man the other day to his flock. Where was their courage not to resent it ? Where their knowledge not to despise it ? Where was their Christianity, at least, not to test it ? Had they never heard of such passages as 1 Peter v. 3 ; 2 Cor. i. 24 ; 1 Cor. iii. 5 ; Matt. xxiii. 10 ?

Lastly, let us learn to exercise a holy distrust of ourselves. What is the real origin of our zeal, the real nature of our religion ? Is it a mere fashion, a careless assent ; love of a system, not of truth ; loyalty to the Church, not to Christ ; obedience to man, not to God ? He whose eyes are as a flame of fire sees through every disguise of that kind. May He Himself make us capable of standing the burning scrutiny of His sight ! May He Himself refine us till He discerns His true image in our hearts !

MATHEMATICUS, M.A.,
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THE FOREIGN PULPIT.—No. XXI.

SUBJECT : *Principles of Action.*

"And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem," &c.—John ii. 13—17.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Forty-fifty.

HAD Christ appeared as a *Teacher simply*, this would have been a great benevolence ; and once scattered abroad in the hearts of men, the truth would not again have perished ; but it would hardly have been so wide-spread in its influence. Where some great thing has to be effected, word and deed, teaching and work must go together ; and with Christ, accordingly, teaching was only one part of his task ; the other was to ordain a fellowship. This is why He needed to appear as the reformer of the existing institutions of religion, and of what

was real in the old-established system : and it is important for us to know from example what principles guided Him in this.

It was the first time since our Redeemer had publicly appeared as a Teacher that He trod the sacred floor of the Temple. The Temple was in some sense the centre of all religious life. To it the hopes and thoughts of the pious turned. From it issued the regulations which held the people together, and separated them from the rest of the world. Here must the work of reformation begin ; here must the foundation be laid of the new spiritual building which Christ had come to erect.

Let us learn from this narrative THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH THE REDEEMER WORKED IN REFORMING THE RELIGIOUS RELATIONS OF MEN.

I. We see here the proof that He DID NOT COME TO DESTROY BUT TO REFORM AND FINISH.

The question may be asked, Why did the Redeemer expose himself to such labour and risk in reforming an institution which He himself so truly prophesied would pass away ? (John iv. 24.) The answer is, we see everywhere that Jesus did not wish to erect the new on the ruins of the old, but, since so much depended on the old, this, when suitably reformed, should attach itself to that.

We should be like Christ in this. His wisdom so truly godlike, His power so peaceful, yet victorious, should we make our own. Never can destruction be the proper design, the conscious and intended aim of a man thoroughly pervaded by His spirit : the aim of such an one will be to sustain and build up unto greater perfection.

II. THE ZEAL OF THE REDEEMER IN PURIFYING THE TEMPLE WAS DIRECTED TO REMOVING—from the place devoted to religious assemblies, and to the quiet edification of the inner life amid the busy world—TO REMOVING ALL THAT COULD ENSNARE MEN AGAIN IN THE CARES AND THOUGHTS OF ORDINARY LIFE.

The really devout and upright, as well as the thoughtless, might think that these outward things were not evil, and would not hinder the soul from truly turning to God. The Temple was sufficiently large. All these business arrangements had to do with the religious life there. Was it not a matter of indiffe-

rence whether they were carried on within or in the neighbourhood of the Temple? Those who allowed themselves to be disturbed by them could only be those whose thoughts would have been disturbed, though every outward occasion had been removed.

But human prudence is one thing; the judgment of Christ is another; and it must here have tended in the right direction. *That which is designed to gather men for the highest purposes, to sustain and develop their fellowship with God, must be kept pure and free from desecration.* The weakness of the human heart will not allow of the outward and the inward, the worldly and the divine, mingling with one another, and requires, too, that there should be an outward severance of these two domains.

The germ of corruption in the Jewish people was this mingling of the sacred and the earthly, of the ecclesiastical and the civil. Hence their tendency to satisfy themselves in religion and morality with the empty word and the outward custom. It was because Christ saw this that He thought it needful to repeat on a subsequent occasion what He did here. Let then our church life and Christian fellowship, ordained by that Lord who here cleared the Temple, be free from all intermingling of the incongruous.

III. WE INQUIRE, WITH WHAT AUTHORITY THE REDEEMER ENGAGED IN THIS WORK? Did he not overstep the bounds of His authority, and mix himself up with what belonged to the rulers and the priests?

No. According to the free custom of that people and age it was competent to any one to assail and remove anything that was at variance with public law. There was at that time play and scope for honest zeal. Where public action is left solely to public officers, there will be indifference to the good which is not actually enjoined, or a leaving it to others. *The Redeemer was far removed from indifference to what was good and from cowardice, and His spirit should pass over into the modes of thought and the habits of all Christians.*

His zealous words accompanied the successful deed, and assured the bystanders that the work of purification which He had begun would be completed. So should we, too, lift our

voices for what is right and good, to win public opinion to them. The scourges which terrify to-day are fear and shame.

We, Christians, are a priestly people called to keep pure the spiritual temple of God on earth.

SCHLEIERMACHER,

By R. VAUGHAN PRYCE, M.A., LL.B.

SUBJECT: *Christ invigorated in the prosecution of His redemptive work.*

“He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall He lift up the head.”—Psa. cx. 7.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Forty-sixth.

THIS Psalm is entirely prophetic of Christ and His kingdom. First: Christ claims for Himself its application. Secondly: The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews founds upon this application an argument for the everlasting priesthood of His Divine Master. “How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, sit thou upon my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.” (Matt. xxii. 43.) “For He testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.” (Heb. vii. 17.)

The subject of the psalm is the dominion and conquest of Christ as king. The text represents Him as a conqueror, in pursuit of those who may flee from the battle, and following them to their utter overthrow; and although somewhat fatigued, stays it not by waiting for royal provisions, but hastily drinks along the way from the running brook and the torrent stream, and returns at last from the expedition with all the trophies of victory, joyous and triumphant.

Our object is to inquire what those sources are, from which, it may be said, that Christ derives encouragement and strength as He prosecutes His great redemptive work in our world, and which will answer to the figurative representation of our text, “He shall drink of the brook in the way,” &c.

I. Christ in the prosecution of His redemptive work is refreshed and invigorated because HE DRINKS FROM THE INEXHAUSTIBLE FOUNTAIN OF HIS OWN LOVE. Christ has enemies. It is a marvel that they should be found upon earth and among men. Satan, by way of eminence, is "*the evil one.*" In him is *no* light, *no* truth, his condition is hopeless. Man is also involved in darkness, but it has never been unrelieved, there has ever been a bright light in the cloud, just as Zechariah indicates, "not clear, nor dark, not day, nor night." Man has the truth, but he holds it in unrighteousness, stifles its voice; in him there is a continued struggle between good and evil, and whichever power holds the sway, the other is on the watch to assert the mastery. The redemption of man is possible, it is looked for, he has departed from the truth, but he may be "converted." Christ came to "destroy the works of the devil," and therefore, the devil is the enemy of the "Son of Man." The second Adam shall build up the ruins of the first. The wonder is, "They have hated Me without a cause," and a greater wonder still is that in the full knowledge of this, the Son of God should have come to redeem them, that when nothing was heard from one end of the earth to the other, but the cry of rebellion, that when there was no movement toward Him, no returning sense of allegiance, no abatement of wickedness, no sign of a relenting contrite spirit, He should have opened such a pathway to God and heaven, that He should not have ceased to love man and utterly to forsake him! "His thoughts are not our thoughts, His ways are not our ways." "When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son." He still prosecutes His work of mercy, because He drinks of the brook in the way—the brook of His eternal inexhaustible love!

II. Christ may be said to drink of the brook in the way, because OF THE PERFECTLY RIGHTEOUS WORK IN WHICH HE IS ENGAGED. If the enthusiastic Hebrew patriot, in the haste and heat of his enterprise, goaded by the obstructions around him, by their mocking and scorn, could speak of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, and of the restoration of her faded beauties as a "great work," how much more may this be said of the Redeemer's work? "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He

shall be seen in His glory." As compared with this, the former creation "shall not be remembered nor come into mind."

"'Twas great to speak the world from nought,
'Twas greater to redeem."

That which stamps it with greatness is its righteous character. The King himself is all attractive in the moral beauty of His character, "He is fairer than the children of men," &c., but He is not less attractive in the righteousness of His work, and therefore, the Father invites Him to the undertaking—"Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Mighty One," &c. "Thine arrows are sharp in the hearts of the king's enemies." "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre." "Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness, therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." (Psa. xlv. 7.) "All His victories are righteous in their end, and in their means." What victories of men are so? "When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin," &c. "By His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many," &c. The consciousness of the rectitude of His entire work is a "brook from which He drinks in the way."

III. The joy in prospect of the final salvation of all the subjects of His kingdom is another "brook from which He drinks in the way." Mark His eagerness to enter upon His work. "Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of Me," &c. How He sought the Father's glory in the recovery of man. "Herein is My Father glorified," &c. This He prized more than honour, reputation, life. For this He bore ignominy, pain, shame. He despised the shame, for the joy that was set before Him. "Therefore, will I divide Him a portion with the great," &c.

IV. Christ may be said to "drink of the brook in the way," from the certainty He has of a final victory over all His foes. "He must reign." All enemies shall be vanquished. Christ is "expecting" this. All enterprises which are not divine and righteous, are uncertain. This is always an oppressive element, and paralyses our energies, it helps to bring about the dreaded disaster; but that of which Christ is the head and leader, cannot

fail. "All power is given unto Him," &c. "Him hath God exalted, and given Him a name," &c. "He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords." "Ask of Me," &c. His final conquest is the only thing in the future that is certain. This makes the future bright. "It shall come to pass that at evening time, it shall be light." So certain is all this, that the reward is already bestowed on Him. He is already exalted, "On His head were many crowns."

There is a word here for the pilgrim soldier. In the weariness of thy pilgrimage, and in the heat of thy pursuit after thy spiritual foes, there is a brook for thee—from it thou shalt drink, and then shall thy "head be lifted up." Look unto Jesus. From Him, as the smitten rock, the refreshing stream shall flow, and it shall follow thee all through the wilderness. Drink of it and thou shalt never perish, let thy attitude be like that of Gideon—"Faint, yet pursuing."

Upper Bangor.

JOHN LEWIS, B.A.



SUBJECT: *The Gospel Invitation.*

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—Rev. xxii. 17.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Forty-seventh.

THIS is the gospel invitation, and the text suggests three things concerning it—

I. IT IS PRECIOUS. Look at the blessing it offers—"Water of life." This includes pardon, peace, and prospective bliss. As with water in the relation to the body, so with these blessings in relation to the soul.

First: All men need them. Secondly: No man can rest without them. He may not know *what* he wants, but he feels that he wants *something*. Proof: All who have them are either (1) seeking to meet the soul's wants with other things;

or, (2) they are seeking these in unscriptural ways. Considering the nature of the soul this conduct *must* be fruitless; it *may* be ruinous. Habit, &c. Thirdly: These blessings never fail to satisfy when they are received. Fourthly: They invigorate as well as refresh. They prompt by gratitude, they direct by precept and example, they encourage by promise of reward.

Remark: It is "water of life," because this *is* life—the life that never dies. It is God-service either this side the grave or beyond it. "Whether living or dying." Thus, while the Christian is prepared *for*, he is also reconciled *to*, death.

II. IT IS UNIVERSAL. "Athirst!" Heaven is lavish, but not wasteful. The thirsty are bidden; *all* the thirsty are bidden. "Whosoever will!" Heaven is cautious of waste, it is also careful of want. First: This meets the timid who need every help. Secondly: While God is no respecter of persons, He is of character. He never asks a suppliant, Who are you? but He always asks, What are you? All men either have this water or want it.

III. IT IS DIVINE. "Spirit!" God. To this end, Firstly: His laws are framed. Secondly: His love is revealed. Thirdly: His providence is ordered. And, Fourthly: The human mind is constituted. Our lower and our higher nature are alike appealed to. "Bride!" Church. (1.) By supporting ministers. (2.) Affording society. Supplying rules and discipline. (4.) Offering spheres of labour. "Him that heareth!" Church combination does not exhaust the Christian's duty; from some personal obligations there is no discharge.

Remarks: Here we see the one thing upon which God and the good are bent. Here we see the object of true life with its test. Are you a merchant, a scholar, a legislator? Is your business, your learning, your legislation conducting you and winning others to Christ? If not, whatever your friends or the world may say, *God* will *not* say, "Well done!"

RICHARD GRAY.

Variations on Themes from Scripture.

(No. XI.)

SUBJECT: *Light in Darkness.*

LIGHT in darkness—light springing up out of darkness—the blessedness of this is emphatically recognised both by signal example and in special promise, in Holy Writ. When the hand of Moses was stretched out toward heaven, and darkness fell over the land of Egypt, even darkness which might be felt—a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days—the Egyptians saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings. “When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.” “For thou wilt light my candle; the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.” In the same Psalm that tells how clouds and darkness are round about Him, the Father of Lights, is contained the exulting assurance, that “light is sown for the righteous.” The light of the righteous rejoiceth, when the lamp of the wicked hath been put out. Well may spiritual aspirations be fervent for light to be sent forth, to lead and to guide to His holy hill and tabernacle, lest the feet of the wayfarer slip in a way that he knows not, and, above all, when they stumble on the dark mountains, or lose their footing in the swelling of Jordan.

Lux è tenebris—who will not prize it? who does not need it? For—

“What am I?

An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry.”

An exceeding bitter cry this crying for the light sometimes is, in such as those, for instance, whom Robertson of Brighton describes as “turning from side to side,” feeling with horror the old, and all they hold dear, crumbling away—the ancient light going out—more than half suspecting the falsehood of the rest,

and with an earnestness amounting to agony, leaving their home, like the Magians, and inquiring for fresh light.

Turning from side to side, with the wailing note of interrogation, "Who will show us any good?" And then, more earnestly than ever, "Lord, lift thou up the LIGHT of thy countenance upon us." In vain we turn from side to side. To whom should we go but unto thee? Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts; show the LIGHT of thy countenance, and we shall be saved.

Observable for special application is what Locke makes observable as a general fact, that new-born children always turn their eyes to that part whence the light comes, lay them how you please.

When the blind are operated on for the restoration of sight, it is suggestively remarked by an eminent author, that the same succouring hand which has opened to them the visible world, immediately shuts out the bright prospect again for a time, a bandage being passed over the eyes, lest in the first tenderness of their recovered sense, they should be fatally affected by the sudden transition from darkness to light. But, as he goes on to say, between the awful blank of total privation of vision, and the temporary blank of vision merely veiled, there lies the widest difference. "In the moment of their restoration the blind have but one glimpse of light, flashing on them in an overpowering gleam of brightness, which the thickest, closest veiling cannot extinguish. The new darkness is not like the void darkness of old: it is filled with rapid, changing visions of brilliant colours and ever-varying forms, rising, falling, whirling hither and thither with every second." And thus is it made evident that even when the handkerchief is passed over them, the once sightless eyes, though bandaged fast, are yet not blinded as they were before. All the more, however, they now dread the blankness of that total eclipse, now that, as it were, to them that walked in the shadow of death, light is sprung up. Light, how much the more precious for that background of blackness of darkness, darkness that still may be felt.

Light that may be felt, is the theme of blind old *Œdipus*, in

Sophocles, at the hour of his mysterious departure—the hour and the power of darkness. Farewell he bids to

“Light, sweet Light!
Rayless to me—mine once, and even now
I feel thee palpable, round this worn form
Clinging in last embrace.”

Immortal as Homer is the prayer of his Ajax to die, if die he must, in the light. Contrast with this the *modus moriendi* of Pompey the Great, as pictured in Corneille :

“D'un des pans de sa robe il couvre son visage,
A son mauvais destin en aveugle obéit,
Et dédaigne de voir le ciel qui le trahit.”

So with the Greek wife in Landor's Hellenics, who resists the bidding to fall not on her knees, but to look up :—

“The hand
That is to slay me, best may slay me thus.
I dare no longer see the light of heaven.”*

But to die in the light is the almost universal craving. The reputed last words of Goethe, “More light,” are typical. “As a matter of fact, nothing,” Lord Lytton has remarked, “is more common than the craving and demand for light a little before death;” and he appeals to the sad experience of any one in tending and watching the last moments of a friend. What more frequent, he asks, than a prayer to open the shutters, and let in the sun? What complaint more repeated, and more touching than “that it is growing dark”? He professes to have once known a sufferer, who did not then seem in immediate danger, suddenly order the sick room to be lit up as for a gala. When this was told to the physician, he said, gravely, “No worse sign.” We all remember the tenor of the last words of Dr. Adam, of the High School, Edinburgh as recorded (however variously), by

* In apposition, or opposition, to which, note the bidding and the demur in Talfourd's tragedy of “Ion” :—

“*Adrastus*. No, strike at once; my hour is come: in thee
I recognise the minister of Jove,
And, kneeling thus, submit me to his power.

Ion. Avert thy face.

Adras. No; let me meet thy gaze,” &c.

Scott, and Lord Cockburn, and others. It was in his bed-chamber, and in the forenoon, that he died ; and finding that he could not see, the old schoolmaster, believing himself in the familiar school-room, exclaimed, "It is getting dark, boys ; we must put off the rest till to-morrow." It was the darkness of death. And to the living, to-morrow, above all, *that* to-morrow, never comes.

M. de Lescure, dying of the wounds he had received at the battle of Chollet, awaited with his usual serenity the advent of his last hour. "Open the windows," said he to his wife, who was watching by his bedside, "is it clear ? " "Yes," she said, "the sun is shining." "I have, then," replied the dying general, "a veil before my eyes." A veil that no man could raise. Chateaubriand, in describing the last hours of his sister, Madame de Beaumont—the Lucile of his *Mémoires d'outre-tombe*—incidentally relates that "she begged of me to open the window. . . . A ray of sunshine rested upon her bed, and seemed to rejoice her spirit." The same circumstance is related of the dying Emperor Alexander. So it is of Dr. Channing. Karl Ludwig Sand, on the scaffold, begged that the bandage over his eyes might be so placed that he could, until his last moment, see the light. And it was so. Turner's biographer tells us that almost at the very hour of the old painter's death, his landlady wheeled his chair to the window, that he might see the sunshine he had loved so much, mantling the river, and glowing on the sails of the passing boats. "The old painter died with the winter-morning sun shining upon his face, as he was lying in his bed. The attendant drew up the window-blind, and the morning sun shone on the dying artist—the sun he had so often beheld with such love and such veneration," and painted, at sundry times, and in divers manners, with such force.

Rousseau's wish, when in a dying state, to be carried into the open air, that he might have "a parting look at the glorious orb of day," is referred to by one of the many biographers of Robert Burns, in recording that poet's remark one beautiful evening, when the sun was shining brightly through the casement. The hand of death was then upon him, and a young friend rose to let down the window-blinds, fearing the light might be too much for him. Burns thanked her, with a look of

great benignity, but prayed her to let the sun shine on : "he will not shine long for me."

Tender and true is the pathos in one of Mrs. Richard Trench's letters, touching the death of her endeared child, Bessy, where we read : "The last phrase she uttered, except those expressive of her latest wants and pain, was a desire the window-curtain might be withdrawn, that she might look at the stars." Sunlight or starlight, it is light we cherish, and that cherishes us. Light from the first, light to the last. Happy, if the light we cherish is the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

FRANCIS JACOX, B.A.

Biblical Criticisms.*

Principle of Organic Unity in Holy Scripture.

"The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed."—Gal. iii. 8.

IF we endeavour to discover how often, and by what modes of statement, such a doctrine as that of our Lord's Divinity is anticipated in the Old Testament, our conclusion will be materially affected by the belief which we entertain respecting the nature and the structure of Scripture itself. At first sight, and judged by an ordinary literary estimate, the Bible presents an appearance of being merely a large collection of heterogeneous writings. Historical records, ranging over many centuries, biographies, dialogues, anecdotes, catalogues of moral maxims, and accounts of social experiences, poetry, the most touchingly plaintive and the most buoyantly triumphant, predictions, exhortations, warnings, varying in style, in authorship, in date, in dialect, are thrown, as it seems, somewhat arbitrarily into a single volume. No stronger tie is supposed to have bound together materials so various and so ill-assorted, than the interested or the too credulous industry of some clerical caste in a distant antiquity, or at best than such uniformity

* In the April number, under this department, the following corrections of the Greek should be observed:—P. 234, *φωγός* misprinted for *φωτός*, *φως* misprinted for *φῶς*, *ἀγάπης* misprinted for *ἀγάπην*; p. 235, *ζωῆς* misprinted for *ζωῆς*, and *ἔδοκεν* misprinted for *ἔδωκεν*.

in the general type of thought and feeling as may naturally be expected to characterize the literature of a nation or of a race. But beneath the differences of style, of language, and of method, which are undeniably prominent in the Sacred Books, and which appear so entirely to absorb the attention of a merely literary observer, a deeper insight will discover in Scripture such manifest unity of drift and purpose, both moral and intellectual, as to imply the continuous action of a Single Mind. To this unity Scripture itself bears witness, and nowhere more emphatically than in the text before us. Observe that St. Paul does not treat the Old Testament as being to him what Hesiod, for instance, became to the later Greek world. He does not regard it as a great repertorium or storehouse of quotations, which might be accidentally or fancifully employed to illustrate the events or the theories of a later age, and to which accordingly he had recourse for purposes of literary ornamentation. On the contrary, St. Paul's is the exact inverse of this point of view. According to St. Paul, the great doctrines and events of the Gospel dispensation were directly anticipated in the Old Testament. If the sense of the Old Testament became patent in the New, it was because the New Testament was already latent in the Old.* Προϊδοῦσα δὲ ἡ γραφὴ ὅτι ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοῖ τὰ ἔθνη ὁ Θεός, προεηγγέλισατο τῷ Ἀβραάμ. Scripture is thus boldly identified with the Mind Which inspires it; Scripture is a living Providence. The Promise to Abraham anticipates the work of the Apostle; the earliest of the Books of Moses determines the argument of the Epistle to the Galatians. Such a position is only intelligible when placed in the light of a belief in the fundamental Unity of all Revelation, underlying, and strictly compatible with its superficial variety. And this true, internal Unity of Scripture, even when the exact canonical limits of Scripture were still unfixed, was a common article of belief to all Christian antiquity. It was common ground to the sub-apostolic and to the Nicene age; to the East and to the West; to the School of Antioch and to the School of Alexandria; to mystical interpreters like St. Ambrose, and to literalists like St. Chrysostom; to cold reasoners, such as Theodoret, and to fervid poets such as Ephrem the Syrian; to those who, with Origen, conceded much to reason, and to those who, with St. Cyril or St. Leo, claimed much for faith. Nay, this belief in the organic oneness of Scripture was not merely shared by schools and writers of divergent tendencies within the Church;

* St. Aug. Quæst. in Ex. qu. 73: "Quamquam et in Vetere Novum lateat, et in Novo Vetus pateat."

it was shared by the Church herself with her most vehement heretical opponents. Between St. Athanasius and the Arians there was no question as to the relevancy of the reference in the Book of Proverbs* to the pre-existent Person of our Lord although there was a vital difference between them as to the true sense and force of that reference. Scripture was believed to contain an harmonious and integral body of Sacred Truth, and each part of that body was treated as being more or less directly, more or less ascertainably, in correspondence with the rest. This belief expressed itself in the world-wide practice of quoting from any one book of Scripture in illustration of the mind of any other book. Instead of illustrating the sense of each writer only from other passages in his own works, the existence of a sense common to all the Sacred Writers was recognised, and each writer was accordingly interpreted by the language of the others. To a modern naturalistic critic it might seem a culpable, or at least an indiscriminating procedure, when a Father illustrates the Apostolical Epistles by a reference to the Pentateuch, or even one Evangelist by another, or the dogmatic sense of St. Paul by that of St. John. And unquestionably, in a merely human literature, such attempts at illustration would be misleading. The different intellectual horizons, modes of thought, shades and turns of feeling, which constitute the peculiarities of different writers, debar us from ascertaining, under ordinary circumstances, the exact sense of any one writer, except from himself. In an uninspired literature, such as the Greek or the English, it would be absurd to appeal to a primitive analist or poet with a view to determining the meaning of an author of some later age. We do not suppose that Hesiod "foresaw" the political doctrines of Thucydides, or the moral speculations of Aristotle. We do not expect to find in Chaucer or in Clarendon a clue to or a forecast of the true sense of Macaulay or of Tennyson. No one has ever imagined that either the Greek or the English literature is a whole in such sense that any common purpose runs persistently throughout it, or that we can presume upon the existence of a common responsibility to some one line of thought in the several authors who have created it, or that each portion is under any kind of obligation to be in some profound moral and intellectual conformity with the rest. But the Church of Christ has ever believed her Bible to be throughout and so emphatically the handiwork of the Eternal Spirit, that it is no absurdity in Christians to cite Moses as foreshadowing the teaching of St. Paul and of St. John. Accord-

* Prov. viii. 22.

ing to the tenor of Christian belief, Moses, St. Paul, and St. John are severally regarded as free yet docile organs of One Infallible Intelligence, Who places them at different points along the line of His action in human history; Who through them and others, as the ages pass before Him, slowly unveils His Mind; Who anticipates the fulness of later revelations by the hints contained in His earlier disclosures; Who in the compass of His boundless Wisdom "reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly ordereth all things."*

Such a belief in the organic unity of Scripture is not fatal to a recognition of those differences between its several portions, upon which some modern critics would lay an exaggerated emphasis. When St. Paul recognises an organic connection between the distant extremities of the records of Revelation, he does not debar himself from recognising differences in form, in matter, in immediate purpose, which part the Law of Moses from the writings of the New Testament.† The unlikeness which subsists between the head and the lower limbs of an animal is not fatal to their common share in its nervous system and in the circulation of its blood. Nay, more, this oneness of Scripture is a truth compatible with the existence within its compass of different measures and levels of Revelation. The unity of consciousness in a human life is not forfeited by growth of knowledge, or by difference of circumstances, or by varieties of experience. Novatian compares the unfolding of the Mind of God in Revelation to the gradual breaking of the dawn, attempered as it is to the human eye, which after long hours of darkness could not endure a sudden outflash of noonday sunlight.‡ The Fathers trace in detail the application of this principle to successive revelations in Scripture, first, of the absolute Unity of God, and, afterwards, of Persons internal to that Unity.§ The Sermon on the Mount contrasts its own higher moral level with that of the earlier dispensation.|| Ethically and dogmatically the New Testament is an advance upon the Old, yet both are within the Unity of Inspiration. Different degrees of light do not imply any intrinsic contrariety. If the Epistle to

* Wisd. viii. 1.

† e. g. cf. Gal. iii. 23—25; Rom. x. 4; Heb. viii. 13.

‡ Novatian, de Trin. c. 26: "Gradatim enim et per incrementa fragilitas humana nutrirī debet, . . . periculosa enim sunt quæ magna sunt, si repentina sunt. Nam etiam lux solis subita post tenebras splendore nimio insuetis oculis non ostendet diem, sed potius faciet cæcitatem."

§ St. Epiphanius, Hæres. 74. 10; St. Gregor. Nazianzen, Orat. xxxi. n. 26. Cf. Kuhn, Dogmatik, Band ii. p. 5.

¶ St. Matt. v. 21, 22, 27, 28, 33, 34; comp. *Ibid.* xii. 5—8.

the Galatians points out the moral incapacity of the Mosaic Law, the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches us its typical and un-failing significance. If Christian converts from Judaism had been "called out of darkness into God's marvellous light,"* yet still "whatsoever things were written aforetime," in the "Jewish Scriptures, were written for the learning of Christians."†

HENRY PARRY LIDDON, M.A.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

FIENDS.

"And in the synagogue there was a man which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not."—Luke iv. 33—35.

ELSEWHERE ‡ we have noticed the parallel passage in Mark, under the heading, "The Relation of Devils to the Christian Religion." We observed that they are attracted to the ministry of Christ, that they have no interest in the redemption of Christ, that they dread destruction from Christ, that they are acquainted with the history of Christ, and that they are repelled by the words of Christ. Our purpose is now to indicate the *incarnation*, the *audacity*, the *abjectness*, the

theology, and the *damnation* of devils.

I. THEIR INCARNATION.

There was an unclean spirit—a fiend in the person of a *man*. What was the incarnation? Was it *personal*? Did this evil spirit enter personally into this man, and take possession of his brain, heart, speech, limbs, &c., or was it *moral*? Morally, all ungodly men are possessed of the devil, they are under the sway of his principles—falsehood, ambition, impiety, &c. There is no antecedent objection to this. There is a tendency in man to believe in the doctrine of transmigration. One human spirit often takes possession of another. The strong lover is ever possessed by the loved. The Bible seems to teach this. In the days of Christ men and women appeared to be the absolute organs and instruments of these fiends, and their ex-

* 1 St. Peter ii. 9.

† Rom. xv. 4.

‡ See HOMILIST, vol. vi., third series, p. 208.

pulsion constituted a great number of our Saviour's miracles. Society presents sometimes instances that support the belief. Not unfrequently, alas, do we find members of our race in such stages of fury, degradation, recklessness, as to suggest that they were fiendishly possessed. Here then we have a devil in man. And it is in man that the devil appears now, not in serpents or seraphs. It is in man he lives, and carries on his work, man is the tempter and the destroyer of man.

II. THEIR AUDACITY. First: *The devil goes to the synagogue.* One would not be surprised to read of fiends going to theatres, gin-palaces, races, &c. No doubt in these places they are thick and active enough. But they go to church, and herein is their audacity. Secondly: *The devil goes to the synagogue to hear Christ.* To go to some churches would not be to go out of his own sphere. There are churches whose ritual he has organised, and whose credenda he has dictated. But to go to church where Christ is—this is audacity. Here, indeed, he has the most to do, and is the most required. What devils there are in all our churches? The devils of pride, scepticism, worldliness, procrastination, &c. “The God of this world hath blinded the eyes of man.” &c.

III. THEIR ABJECTNESS. This

fiend appears here, First: *As consciously deserted by mercy.* “What have we to do with thee?” Thou art the Redeemer, the Saviour of men, but not of us; we have no interest in thee. “What have we to do with thee?” Secondly: *As apprehensive of greater misery.* “Art thou come to destroy us?” What destruction did they apprehend? That of memory, conscience, existence, obligation? No, they would have hailed the destruction of any or all of these. It was the destruction of their power over humanity that they dreaded. They have an infernal delight in sporting with human nature, they hold their revelries in human souls. They are miserable now, and shudder at the darker clouds that are rolling up their horizon.

IV. THEIR THEOLOGY. “I know thee who thou art: the Holy One of God.” First: *They believed in God.* They were no atheists. Secondly: *They believed in the Messiahship of Christ.* They were no Jews. “The Holy One of God.” These are the cardinals of true theology. Faith in the one God of the universe, and the one Redeemer of mankind. “I know thee, who thou art.” There are many *men* who do not know Him. “Some say that thou art John the Baptist, some Elias,” &c. Were Christ to ask the fiends in hell, “Whom do ye say I am?” there would be but one answer,

"The Holy One of God." "I know thee."

V. THEIR DAMNATION. This fiend was now damned in two ways. First: *By the rejection of his prayer.* "Hold thy peace." Christ encourages the prayers of *men*. "Seek, and ye shall find; knock and it shall be open unto you," &c. "Enter into thy closet," &c. But He will not listen to the prayers of devils. "Hold thy peace." Their cries do not touch His heart. Secondly: *By the destruction of his dominion.* "Come out of him." "And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him and hurt him not. Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, and will one day expel him from all souls and banish him from the world," &c.

HOSPITALITY.

"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."—Heb. xiii. 2.

A SKETCH on this passage appeared in HOMILIST, vol. ix., third series, page 99. Our remarks on it now, though independent of that, may form a suitable introduction to it. Our observations shall be based upon the truths which stand prominently on the surface of the passage.

I. THAT THERE ARE THOSE WHO REQUIRE HOSPITALITY FROM US. "Be not forgetful

to entertain strangers." Elsewhere in the apostolic epistles hospitality is also urged. It is represented not only as the essential qualification of a bishop (1 Tim. iii. 2; Titus i. 9), but is urged as an obligation upon Christians in general. (Rom. xii. 13.) But what is hospitality? Is it to give liberal and frequent entertainments to your friends, to have bed and board ever ready for those of your own circle? No; it is the gratuitous entertainment of the "*stranger*" and the *needy*. In the primitive age, Christians were driven by persecution from their homes, and compelled to travel in strange lands, destitute of the means of subsistence, and dependent upon the generosity of their brethren. John commended his well-beloved Gaius for this. "Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers." (3 John 5.) Genuine hospitality is ever characterised by two things. First: Kindness to those that *require it*. There is no true hospitality in preparing sumptuous banquets for those who have ample provisions in their own houses. Vanity and selfishness, and not generosity, are the presiding genii of such banquets. Secondly: Kindness to those that *cannot require it*. That entertainment which is given to others, with the view of receiving enter-

tainment in return, is no hospitality. The heavenly teacher has sketched the ideal of genuine hospitality. "But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." (Luke xiv. 13.)

II. THAT SOME OF THOSE WHO REQUIRE HOSPITALITY FROM US MAY BE ANGELS. "Some have entertained angels unawares." There is evidently an allusion here to Abraham and Lot, who in their tent at Mamre hospitably entertained three strangers in human form who turned out to be angels. Some men have much of the devil in them, selfish, greedy, ambitious, false; they are of their father the devil. We have entertained such men and found them to be devils "unawares." Thank God there are men who have in them a deal of the "angel," pure in feeling, elevated in motive, devout and generous, fertile with soul-quickenings and uplifting thoughts. You have entertained them, and your kindness has brought the "angel" out. Under many a rough form and tattered garb there is an angelic soul. "Be not forgetful, therefore, to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

III. THAT THE ANGELIC HAS

AN ESPECIAL CLAIM UPON THE ATTENTION OF MAN. This is evidently implied, First: *Angels love man devotedly.* "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." (Luke xv. 10.) Secondly: *Angels can help man effectively.* Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth? How can they help? By importing into their souls those heavenly thoughts that illumine, free, purify, ennoble, celestialise. This they can do in two ways. (1.) *Without human agency.* What good man has not often experienced holy thoughts coming into his mind that he could not account for on the laws of mental association, that came neither as the result of his own thinking, nor through the agency of his fellow men? Angels may have direct communication to souls. (2.) *By human agency.* It is the angel in the man that can help his fellows, and therefore, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

THE POLITICAL CHARACTER OF
THE GOOD TIME COMING.

"The saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever."—Dan. vii. 18.

"THERE is a good time coming," so says the poet, so

saith the Scriptures. The golden age of the world is not in the past, it is in the future, the age of immortal light, liberty, peace, virtue, religion, and blessedness are all ahead. The text indicates the political character of that golden age.

I. IT WILL HAVE A GOOD GOVERNMENT. "The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom. The word "Saints" has become a by-word. The millions regard it as representing the mawkish, the intolerant, the canting, and hypocritical. The idea of *saints* governing the world has to them everything that is repulsive rather than promising. They say, "Look at your mitred saints, using evermore their political power against freedom, justice, and the public good. Heaven deliver us from the government of *saints*!" Be calm, friend! You mistake the counterfeit for the genuine coin. The man whom God calls a *saint* is a man whom you are made to love, in whose wisdom and goodness you would place your utmost confidence. True saintliness means honesty, brotherliness, disinterested philanthropy, and elevated piety. Sainthood means goodness. To be a saint, in one word, is to be Christ-like; and were all men Christ-like, what a world it would be. A kingdom under such rulers would First: *Be an educated kingdom*. The works of nature, the events of history, the facts and

doctrines of revelation would be universally studied. "All would know the Lord," &c. It would, Secondly: *Be a virtuous kingdom*. Christ is the model and the master of the *saints*. By His principles they would shape all their laws, by His spirit they would be inspired in every legislative Act. They would not mould their code after Greece or Rome, but after Calvary. It would, Thirdly: *Be a free kingdom*. Saints are lovers of freedom. Freedom in religion in politics, in commerce, in inquiry. In that kingdom no Church or Priesthood would dare to assume authority over the faith of men. It would, Fourthly: *Be a peaceable kingdom*. Every subject would do unto his fellow what his fellow would do unto him. Hence nations would break their swords into ploughshares, &c. Military establishments will only live in memory.

II. IT WILL HAVE A PERMANENT GOVERNMENT. "And possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever." Now the expression may not express eternity, but it undoubtedly represents an indefinitely vast period of time. Three considerations support a belief in its permanence. First: *The length of time in gaining it*. The instinct of true sainthood is aggressive and imperial. The saints from Abel down have been endeavouring to sway the minds of men by their

heavenly thoughts and aims. For upwards of sixty long centuries, millions have struggled, bled, and died in order to enthrone the right. As yet, the day when the imperial power of the world shall be theirs is lost in the haze of the distant future. After all this, is it not probable that when universal power comes to them, it will be a *permanent* possession? Secondly: *The firm hold which the morally true takes upon human nature.* The false, the unrighteous, the immoral, though recommended by imperial pageantry and enforced by the invincibility of arms, can never take a firm hold upon human nature. Hence the mutation and fleetness of all human governments. They do not strike their root into the hearts of the people. But the government of the *saints* being that of truth, equity, honour, love, humanity, religion, will take an *unrelaxable* grasp upon the intellect, heart, conscience, and soul of the people, and will endure from generation, even unto generation. What evil agency in the universe could seduce a whole world of *thoroughly redeemed* men to sin, crime, and anarchy again? Thirdly: *The mediatorial life of Jesus Christ.* Why did Christ come into the world, teach, suffer, labour, pray, and die? Why did He rise from the dead, ascend to heaven,

and send down His spirit? Why? To destroy the works of the devil, to establish rectitude on the earth, and to set up "a kingdom that shall never be moved."

THE LOVE OF GOD.

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16.

HERE WE HAVE—

I. LOVE IN ITS GRANDEST SOURCE. "God so loved." God can love, does love. How near that fact brings Him to us, to our hearts. We may admire and revere other qualities, but can love only the loving. Here we have—

II. LOVE IN ITS PUREST FORM. It was the love of benevolence directed to the "world" that "might perish." It was directed to a guilty and a personally offensive world. Love appears in its utmost pureness and freeness when it passes over, not only demerit but offence, not only dispenses with merit, but rises above self, withstands provocation, blesses those that curse, and does good to those that injure its possessor. "Christ died for the ungodly." Here we have—

III. LOVE IN ITS GREATEST STRENGTH. There is a benevolence that pities without helping, that says, "be ye warmed," &c. The love of God was practical in the most costly

way. Of all sacrifices the chief are sacrifices of *persons*. The highest sphere of value is in *persons*, not things. Of all persons that of Christ is the highest. His only begotten Son. "If God spared not His own Son," &c. Here we have—

IV. LOVE IN ITS LOFTIEST PURPOSE. "Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It delivers from death—it gives life, of the highest kind—more, it gives its highest kind of life for ever—everlastingly. Here we have

V. LOVE IN ITS WIDEST SPHERE. "The world" is used sometimes in a restricted sense, there is no reason to suppose it is so used here. It means mankind, the whole fallen race.

CONCLUSION: You have here a *pattern* and *spring* of love, model and motive. "Be imitators of God, as dear children, &c. What a Gospel is here! The moment you abridge, restrict, condition, you destroy the hope of man. Its attributes are spontaneity, eternity, self-caused, self-sacrificing, self-imparting.

A. J. MORRIS.

GLORIFYING GOD.

"There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger."—Luke xvii. 18.

WE glorify God—

I. BY PRAYER. "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." Prayer the cry of need. His

need urgent, and in its cause, symptoms and consequences, a figure of sin—our deepest need. The consciousness of need should find expression. The cry of need implies confidence. Prayer the way to Christ still. He alone can help.

II. BY EXPECTATION AND OBEDIENCE. "As they went they were cleansed." They went in expectation—resting on the word of Christ. The expectation of aid prompted obedience, which is honouring to God and a fountain of blessing. Obedience the path of discipline.

III. BY GRATITUDE. "He turned back," under the promptings of impulsive gratitude, "giving Him thanks." The work of healing Christ's, not ours; it is His to give, ours to receive. Grateful acknowledgment is due from us; the prompting of love. The nine showed themselves to the priests and offered the required sacrifice there; *they* were grateful for restoration; *the one* was grateful to the restorer. Gratitude should turn our eye to Christ who heals, rather than to ourselves who are healed. Ingratitude is worldly and selfish. Where gratitude is forgotten way is made for the entrance of pride.

IV. BY CONFESSION. "With a loud voice glorified God." Christ requires of us confession of Him, honours our confession. (Matt. x. 32.) "It is not of

much consequence; surely it is better to have and not confess, than confess and not have." If it is not much to render will you withhold that little? Is that love?

V. BY SUBMISSION AND SERVICE. "He cast Himself at His feet." A philanthropist purchased a slave in order to set him at liberty. "Can I now do what I will?" he said. "Yes." "Then," said the grateful negro, "I will be your slave." Our service that of loving sons, intelligently rendered, constant, dignified, and suitable.

R. VAUGHAN PRYCE.

SKETCHES FROM GENESIS. (IX.)
ABRAM'S PROPOSAL TO LOT.

"And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left."—Gen. xiii. 8, 9.

I. THIS PROPOSAL SHOWS THAT A GOOD MAN LOVES PEACE RATHER THAN WEALTH. The unpleasantness which had arisen between the servants of Abram and Lot would naturally spread, and end in sad results; so this offer is given Lot that the discord may end. The moral tone of these words implies, that he preferred poverty to strife and contention. First:

Because strife hardens the heart. A man long accustomed to strifes will soon find his whole nature embittered, and will become indifferent to the welfare of others; and wealth without a tender heart, without compassion to the poor and needy, would be a poor inheritance indeed. Peace is the spirit of the Gospel, and its entrance into the soul calms the raging tempest within. True that "wisdom is good with an inheritance," but when the inheritance is a cause of inward strife, rather than wisdom should be lost, let the inheritance be relinquished, because "the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it." Secondly: *Because strife destroys a man's happiness.* Wealth is one of those blessings that can render us some amount of happiness in the present, but not of itself; it can only remove some of the thorns out of our path. Wealth can only arrange the outward; it cannot enter the inward life; and should *this* be the scene of strife, happiness is distant from the soul. Happiness is always found in a tranquil dwelling. The Christian smiles in the midst of conflicting elements, whilst others fear and tremble; the storm rages without, but peace reigns within. Thirdly: *Because strife hinders one's spiritual progress.* Strife is detrimental to every true progress; the warlike contests of nations retard the moral, social,

and political progress of humanity. It is the same with individuals; the warlike disposition, the bosom racked with jealousies and contending, incapacitates the man in taking an active part in life's struggle; his strength is devoured. The spiritual career is represented as a struggle, a warfare; but that has reference to the spiritual foes we have to contend with; but peace and goodwill towards men must fill the soul before the image of Him that prayed for his enemies, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," will increase.

II. THAT A GOOD MAN HAS CONFIDENCE IN THE RULER OF THE UNIVERSE. This is not the language of reckless indifference; he valued the natural gifts of God, and looked upon them as expressions of a Father's love, and his confidence in that Father enabled him to waive his claims as a senior to choose first. First: *He had confidence in God's wisdom.* Here he leaves his worldly affairs entirely in God's hands, trusting that the path pointed out to him would be the wisest and best. Much of the usefulness of life is wasted away in murmurings and complaints, instead of doing our duties in the full consciousness that in

His wisdom He leads us aright. Secondly: *He had confidence in God's love.* His knowledge of God consisted not merely as the Ruler of the world, but also as a covenant God, and now when leaving his temporal affairs in His hands, had perfect confidence in His love, that his future would be provided for as well as the past had been. Could we look to God as a loving Father, life's journey would be far easier to travel, and our burdens much lighter.

III. THAT A GOOD MAN HAS HIGHER INTERESTS THAN WORLDLY PROSPERITY. Abram no doubt was mindful of his worldly interest, and that of his family, but his mind was centred in the covenant God made with him; and to shape his course in order to obtain the blessings contained in that covenant, was the all-absorbing theme of his soul. The present life ought to be considered as preparatory to a higher and a purer life. How many lose sight of their spiritual interests in their efforts to obtain the wealth of this world!

CONCLUSION. — How great the power of faith! No other power could have enabled him to give such a generous offer, but that of faith.

CYMRÔ.

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCXXIII.)

THE TERRIFIC IN HUMAN GOVERNMENTS.

"The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion; whose provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own soul."
—Prov. xx. 2.

I TAKE the "king" here as representing government, whether democratic, aristocratic, monarchical, or the three combined, as in the government of our country. The supreme judicial, and executive authority is the king. The text implies three things concerning human governments.

I. Human governments contain in them the TERRIFIC. "The fear of a king"—a government. Government implies laws, and laws imply punitive sanctions. Behind all governments there is the power to take away the property, the comfort, the liberty, the rights, the existence of the disobedient. Terrible power this, and it is held by all constitutional governments. A true king is "a terror to evil doers."

II. The terrific in human government can be provoked INTO ACTION. "Whoso provoketh him to anger." Disobedience and disloyalty bring out the terrible in human governments. The dark dungeons, the clanking chains, the penal inflictions, the scaffold and the gallows, are all brought forth by disobedience. Transgression wakes the thunder.

The ruler "beareth not the sword in vain."

III. He that provokes it into action brings ruin on HIMSELF. He rouses the lion whose "roar" is overwhelming. It roars for destruction. No one man can stand before it. It will require an army to capture and overcome the roaring lion of an offended government. The British lion, when excited, can strike terror through the world and tear a nation into pieces. The man ruins himself, who by his disobedience brings out this lion. He "sinneth against his own soul."

(No. CCXXIV.)

LAWFUL STRIFE.

"It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling."—Prov. xx. 3.

THERE is a lawful strife. Strife against the false, the selfish, the impure, the unrighteous, the ungodly, is lawful, is incumbent. The conquest of wrong is essential to the dignity and blessedness of heaven. "He that overcometh," &c. The text leads us to notice two things.

I. THE HONOUR OF CEASING FROM UNLAWFUL STRIFE. "It is an honour for a man to cease from strife." In order for the ceasing to be honourable, it must, First: *Be voluntary*. If a man ceases from strife because

he is so baffled, disabled, crushed; that he could not but desist, there is no honour in it. He must withdraw voluntarily. Secondly: *It must be self-denying.* If there are no insults to avenge, no wrongs to resent, no rights to demand, what honour would there be in desisting? The honour is in giving up when on the right side. Thirdly: *It must be forgiving.* If in ceasing there remains aught of rancour or revenge in the breast there is no honour in it. Wherever strife is voluntarily, self-denyingly, and forgivingly withdrawn from there is honour. The honour (1.) Of self-conquest. The man who has done so has conquered his own passions. (2.) The honour of divine magnanimity. Such ceasing from strife is God-like.

II. THE FOLLY OF CREATING SOCIAL STRIFE. "Every fool will be meddling." Meddling is the parent of strife. An officious interference with the business of others, a prying into their concerns, create discords. All strifes, domestic, social, ecclesiastic, and political, may be traced to meddlesomeness. The meddling man is a fool, because he gratifies his own idle curiosity at the expense of his own well-being and the happiness of society. "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the

which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful."

"'Tis death to me to be at enmity; I hate it, and desire all good men's love."
SHAKESPEARE.

(No. CCXXV.)

INDOLENCE.

"The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing."—Prov. xx. 4.

"If you ask me," says one, "which is the real hereditary sin of human nature, do you imagine I shall answer pride, or luxury, or ambition, or egotism? No. I shall say indolence. Who conquers indolence will conquer all the rest. Indeed, all good principles must stagnate without mental activity." Solomon would endorse this view, for no evil does he more frequently describe and denounce than indolence. We have already met with his views several times on the subject.* And we shall meet with them frequently again as we proceed with this book. The words suggest two remarks concerning indolence.

I. IT PLEADS WRETCHED EXCUSES. "The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold." What a futile reason is this! Cold weather was the time for plowing. In summer heat it is too late to upturn the soil and prepare it for the seed. Its germinating power has gone for the year. Besides, no better means could be found to overcome the cold than by plowing. There is no better way to over-

* Chap. x. 4, 26; xii. 11, 24, 27; xiii. 4, 23; xv. 19; xvi. 26; xviii. 9; xix. 15, 24.

come the chilly influence of the atmosphere, to send a healthful glow through the whole body than physical exercise. No fire on the hearth could ever warm the human frame so effectually as the fire that bodily activity kindles within. This is only a specimen of the miserable excuses that indolence pleads. It has always some lion in the hedge, some thorn in the hedge. Indolence sterile in goodness, is fertile in excuses. The indolent man will not work either because the work is too mean or too important, or because the season is too early or too late, too hot or too cold.

II. IT ENTAILS GREAT MISERY.

First: *Beggary*. "Therefore shall he beg." What greater degradation for a man than to become a mendicant. Indolence leads to pauperism. Secondly: *Beggary in harvest*. Beggary at the season, when others have plenty, and when he too ought to have plenty. Thirdly: *Beggary without success*. "He shall beg in harvest, and have nothing." Because none can pity laziness, his petitions are rejected. There is a great harvest before us all. Those who have been spiritually indolent, neglecting the cultivation of their souls, will then be found begging, and begging in vain. "They that were foolish, took their lamps, and took no oil with them; but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out; But the wise answered,

saying, *not so*; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves."

(No. CCXXVI.)

THE GETTING OF WISDOM FROM THE WISE.

"Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out."—Prov. xx. 5.

We take the word "counsel" here to mean wisdom which is "counsel in the heart of man." The distinction which Cowper draws between knowledge and wisdom is philosophical and important:—

"Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,
Have oftentimes no connection. Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men,
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own:
Knowledge a rude unprofitable mass,
The mere materials with wisdom builds,
Till smoothed and square, and fitted into place,
Does but encumber what it seems to enrich.
Knowledge is proud that he has learn'd so much,
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more."

From the text four remarks may be drawn.

I. THAT WISDOM TO MAN IS A VERY VALUABLE THING. It is here represented as "water," which "a man of understanding" will strive to get at. We have had occasion frequently to sketch the advantages of knowledge. Without repeating ourselves, we may here say, that knowledge does two things for man. First: *It improves the sphere of his being.* The sphere of man's mental ex-

istence, large or small, bright or gloomy, sterile or fruitful, happy or otherwise, depend entirely upon the kind and amount of his intelligence. An ignorant soul has a wretchedly small and cloudy circle to move in. There is as much difference between the sphere of an intelligent man and that of an ignorant man as there is between a dungeon and a palace. Another thing which knowledge does for man is, Secondly: *It improves the powers of his being.* It brightens the eyes of the intellect, and gives to imagination pinions for a loftier and farther flight; it gives to thought a wider reach and a firmer grasp, and unseals in the soul new fountains of delicious sentiment and feeling.

II. THAT SOME MEN ARE FAVOURED WITH MORE WISDOM THAN OTHERS. This is implied. Solomon supposes that in some men it lies as "deep" as "water." So it does. The difference in the amount of men's intelligence arises from the difference in their capacities, proclivities, and opportunities for mental improvement. There are men of genius, men of strong philosophic tendencies, men of leisure, men with splendid libraries; such men are in a position to get more knowledge than the millions who are less favoured. Hence it comes to pass that in all circles there are those with valuable intelligence, like "*deep water*" within them.

III. THAT THOSE WHO HAVE THE MOST WISDOM ARE GENERALLY THE MOST RESERVED. This is manifestly implied from the expression, "*will draw it*

out." It will not run out spontaneously; it has to be *drawn* out. Where knowledge dwells in large quantities, it is not like water on the surface, that you can get at easily; it is rather like water that lies fathoms under earth, clear, beautiful, and refreshing, got at only by the pump, or the windlass and bucket. It has to be *drawn* out. It has always been, and perhaps ever will be, that the most intelligent men are the most modest and reserved. The superficial are talkative; the profound are taciturn. The fluent in speech is ever the shallow in thought. Great knowledge is always reticent.

IV. THAT IN CONSEQUENCE OF THIS RESERVEDNESS OF THE MOST WISE, IT REQUIRES SAGACITY IN OTHERS TO DRAW IT FORTH. "A man of understanding will draw it out." Would you draw knowledge out of the wise man in your circle? There is a way to do it. Not by flippant questionings, but by modest enquiries propounded in a truth-loving spirit. Would you draw knowledge out of your teacher? You must so study the lessons that he gives you, as to bring his mind into a constant flow to supply your cravings after knowledge. Would you *draw* knowledge of the highest kind from your minister? Then let him feel that you have come to "enquire in the house of the Lord." Our pulpits are filled with thoughtless men, because congregations will not think. Even Christ Himself felt that He could not unfold what was in Him on account of the ignorance and the prejudice of his auditory.

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

DR. ROBERT SOUTH

WAS one of the most celebrated preachers of the seventeenth century. Many interesting anecdotes are told concerning him. On one occasion he preached, as chaplain to Charles II., before the Court, which, at that disastrous period, was composed of the most profligate men of the nation. He soon perceived that his reluctant hearers were fast asleep. He stopped short in his harangue, and changing his tone of voice into one of solemn remonstrance, he called out to Lord Lauderdale three times. His Lordship stood up. "My Lord," said South, with inimitable dignity, "I am sorry to interrupt your repose, but I must beg of you that you will not snore so loudly, lest you awaken his Majesty."

On another occasion, when preaching before the King, he chose for his text these words: "The lot is cast into the lap, but the disposing of it is of the Lord." In this sermon he introduced three remarkable instances of unexpected advancement:—

"Who that looked upon Agathocles first handling the clay, and making pots under his father, and afterwards turning robber, could have thought that from such a condition he should have come to be King of Sicily?"

"Who that had seen Massaniello, a poor fisherman with his red cap and his angle, would have reckoned it possible to see such a pitiful thing, within a week after, shining in his cloth of gold, and with a word or nod

absolutely commanding the whole city of Naples?"

"And who that beheld such a bankrupt, beggarly fellow as Cromwell, first entering the Parliament House with a threadbare torn cloak, greasy hat, (perhaps neither of them paid for), could have suspected that in the space of so few years, he should, by the murder of one king, and the banishment of another, ascend the throne?" At which the king fell into a fit of laughter; and turning to Dr. South's patron, Mr. Lawrence Hyde, afterwards Lord Rochester, said, "Odd fish, Lory, your chaplain must be a bishop, therefore put me in mind of him at the next death."

Bishop Kennet says of South, that he "laboured very much to compose his sermons; and, in the pulpit worked up his body when he came to a piece of wit, or any notable saying."

His wit was certainly the least of his recommendations, though it was sometimes fearfully pungent and sarcastic. He sometimes indulged in it to excess, and violated the awful sanctity of the pulpit. Sherlock is said to have accused him of employing the doubtful weapon of wit in a controversy on the Holy Trinity. South made but a sorry and unsatisfactory reply: "Had it pleased Providence to have made you a lock, what would you have done?"

In the year 1680, when Dr. South was rector of Islip, in Oxfordshire, a small chapel in the gift of the rector became vacant. Dr. South's curate who,

like too many curates at present, performed the whole duty of the parish without an adequate remuneration, applied for the vacant situation. This was refused. The following Sunday being the fifteenth day of the month, he devoutly expressed his feelings in the regular course of the service by thus reading the seventh verse of the seventy-fifth Psalm: "Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from *thee* (the) South." The doctor conceded to wit what merit had failed to obtain, and the curate found himself in possession of the wished-for dignity — "passing rich, with forty pounds a year."

The following passages are specimens of his nobler and better method:—

Man formed in the image of God.—"Such was his *understanding*, his noblest faculty. It was then sublime, clear, aspiring, and, as it were, the soul's upper region, lofty and serene, free from the vapours and disturbances of the inferior affections. It was the leading, controlling faculty; all the passions wore the colours of reason; it was not consul, but dictator.

"Discourse was then almost as quick as intuition; it was nimble in proposing, firm in concluding; it could sooner determine than now it can dispute. Like the sun, it had both light and agility; it knew no rest, but in motion; no quiet, but in activity; it did not so properly apprehend as irradiate the object; not so much find as make things intelligible: it did arbitrate upon the several reports of sense, and all the varieties of imagination; not like the drowsy judge, only hearing, but also directing their verdict. In fine,

it was *vegete*, quick, and lively; open as the day, untainted as the morning, full of the innocence and sprightliness of youth: it gave the soul a bright and full view into all things, and was not only a window, but itself a prospect. Briefly, there is as much difference between the clear representation of the understanding then, and the obscure discoveries that it makes now, as there is between the prospect of a casement and of a keyhole."

Adam a Philosopher.—"Adam came into the world a philosopher, which sufficiently appeared by his writing the nature of things upon their names. He could view essences in themselves, and read forms without the comment of their respective properties; he could see consequents yet dormant in their principles, and effects yet unborn, and in the womb of their causes; his understanding could almost pierce into future contingents, his conjectures improving even to prophecy or the certainties of prediction; till his fall, it was ignorant of nothing but of sin; or at least it rested in the notion, without the smart of the experiment. Could any difficulty have been proposed, the resolution would have been as early as the proposal; it could not have had time to settle into doubt. Like a better Archimedes, the issue of all his inquiries was an *εὕρηκα*, an *εὕρηκα*, the offspring of his brain without the sweat of his brow. Study was not then a duty—night watchings were needless; the light of reason wanted not the assistance of a candle. This is the doom of fallen man; to labour in the fire; to seek truth

in profundo; to exhaust his time and impair his health, and perhaps to spin out his days and himself into one pitiful, controverted conclusion. There was then no poring, no struggling with memory—no straining for invention; his faculties were quick and expedite; they answered without knocking; they were ready upon the first summons; there was freedom and firmness in all their operations. I confess it is difficult for us, who date our ignorance from our first being, and were still bred up with the same infirmities about us with which we were born, to raise our thoughts and imagination to those intellectual perfections that attended our nature in the time of innocence, as it is for a peasant, bred up in the obscurities of a cottage, to fancy in his mind the unseen splendours of a court. But by rating positives by their privatives and other arts of reason, by which discourse supplies the want of the reports of sense, we may collect the excellency of the understanding then, by the glorious remainders of it now, and guess at the stateliness of the building by the magnificence of its ruins. All these arts, rarities, and inventions, which vulgar minds gaze at, the ingenious pursue, and all admire, are but the reliques of an intellect defaced with sin and time. We admire it now only as antiquaries do a piece of old coin, for the stamp it once bore, and not for those vanishing lineaments and disappearing draughts that remain upon it at present. And certainly that must needs have been very glorious, the decays of which are so admirable. He that is comely when old and decrepit,

surely was very beautiful when he was young. An Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam, and Athens but the rudiments of paradise."

An anecdote is related of South which illustrates the condensation of his style. On one occasion Charles II., complimenting him on his sermon, said, "I wish you had had time to make it longer." The epigrammatic South replied, "I wish, sire, I had had time to make it shorter."

The witty and caustic Dean Swift found a party once indifferent to his observations. He exclaimed with considerable petulance, "My remarks could not be less attended to if they were delivered from the pulpit."

The following pithy lines were especially applicable to the sermons of the seventeenth century:—

"Some take a text sublime and fraught
with sense,
But quickly fall into impertinence.
On trifles eloquent with great delight
They flourish out on some strange
mystic rite;
But to subdue the passions, or direct,
And all life's moral duties they
neglect.
Most preachers err, except the wiser
few,
Thinking established doctrines, there-
fore, true.
Others, too fond of novelty and
schemes,
Amuse the world with airy, idle
dreams.
Thus too much faith or too presuming
wit
Are rocks where bigots or freethinkers
split.
'Tis not enough that what you say is
true,
To make us feel it *you* must feel it
too;
Show yourself warm, and that will
warmth impart
To every hearer's sympathising
heart."

C. P. L.

Notes on New Books.

BY A BARRISTER.

A most interesting *Biography of Walter Savage Landor*, in two volumes, is from the pen of Mr. John Forster. Messrs. Chapman and Hall are the publishers.

A Memoir of Thomas Bewick (the Author of "Bewick's History of British Birds"), written by himself, and containing numerous woodcuts, is issued by Messrs. Longmans.

The Works of Jonathan Swift, D.D., Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin, in a selected form, and containing a biography of the author, are published in one volume, having been prepared by Mr. D. Laing Purves. (Edinburgh, Nimmo).

Mr. James Haig, M.A., publishes at Messrs. Blackwood's, *Symbolism, or Mind, Matter, Language*, as the elements of thinking and reasoning, and as the necessary factors of human knowledge.

The Logic of Names (Walton) is intended by its author, Mr. J. P. Hughlings, B.A., Professor in Elphinstone College, Bombay, to be an introduction to Boole's *Laws of Thought*.

Messrs. Williams and Norgate publish *The Homilies of Aphraates, the Persian Sage*, edited from Syriac M.SS. of the fifth and sixth centuries in the British Museum, with an English translation by Dr. W. Wright.

Mr. Michael Thomas Sadler publishes at Messrs. Longmans, *The Bible, the People's Charter*.

A Synoptical History of England, which aims to combine the advantages of the narrative and tabular form, is published by Mr. James Walton. It includes history from the earliest records to the present time.

Mr. Montague Burrows, M.A., Professor of Modern History at Oxford, publishes at Mr. Murray's *Seven Lectures*, which he delivered in the University, on *Constitutional Progress*.

Far and Wide, a diary of long and distant travel, 1857-60, is the work of Mr. Joseph Frith, published by Messrs. Ward and Lock.

Mr. Murray publishes two interesting volumes by the Rev. Henry Fanshawe Tozer, M.A., being *Researches in the Highlands of Turkey*, including visits to Mounts Ida, Athos, Olympus, and Pelion—to the Merdite Albanians, and other remote tribes. It contains notes on the ballads, tales, and classical superstitions of the modern Greek.

Mr. John Bolton, at the age of seventy-eight, publishes an admirable volume on the subject to which he has devoted much of his useful life. It is called *Geological Fragments*, collected principally from rambles among the rocks of Furness and Cartmel, and is published by Messrs. Whittaker.

Mr. John Timbs issues a book of curiosities, called *Historic Ninepins*. Also, *Notable Things of Our Own Time*, being a supplementary volume of

Things Not Generally Known, Messrs. Lockwood and Co. are the publishers of both.

Free Town Libraries (Trübner and Co.) is the title of an account, by Mr. Edward Edwards, of their Formation and History in Britain, France, Germany, and America.

The Indian Tribes of Guiana (Bell and Daldy) is a work by the Rev. W. H. Brett, on their habits and condition, history, antiquities, and languages.

Messrs. Chapman and Hall publish *Our Life in Japan*, by R. M. Jephson and E. P. Elmhirst, 9th Regiment.

Mr. Goldwin Smith has published (J. C. Hotten), *The Present Relations of England and America*, being a reply to Senator Sumner's recent speech on the claims of the American Government against England.

The Parks, Promenades, and Gardens of Paris, considered in relation to the wants of our own cities, &c., are treated of in a work published by Mr. Murray, for Mr. W. Robinson, F.L.S., which contains four hundred illustrations.
B. A. L.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

BENEDICITE: or, the Song of the Three Children. By G. CHAPLIN CHILD, M.A. London: John Murray, Albemarle Street.

THE object of this book is to illustrate the character of the Almighty as displayed in the Creation, and also to show the peculiar fitness of the "Benedicite," both to awaken and express the profound sentiments of worship. The Benedicite, supposed to be a song by the three children in the fiery furnace, and sung in the Christian Church as early as the time of St. Chrysostom, is, as our readers are aware, very much like Psalm cxlviii. It is a call upon every part of nature, sun and moon, nights and days, frost and cold, beasts and cattle, &c., to worship the Creator. The author discusses all these parts of nature scientifically, and shows how they illustrate the power and beneficence of the Creator. It is an admirable book, redolent with scientific information used by the Christian philosopher for the highest spiritual ends. The following extract is a fair specimen:—

"It would be easy to fill a volume with stories about the affectionate ways of birds, but it is impossible adequately to portray them in a few

paragraphs. The genuine, almost self-immolating tenderness they display towards their young, is proverbial; while the contemplation of it always affords a large amount of pleasure to hearts open to such influences. The very names of some birds are a testimony to their gentle nature. Thus, the word 'Stork,' both in Hebrew, Greek, and English, expresses affection and kindness. It has been said that the young retain their love for their parents long after the usual nest ties have been dissolved, and even cherish and feed them when they have become helpless through old age. What truth there may be in this popular tradition, need not here be discussed, but everybody must at least wish that so pleasing a trait of bird-nature should be true. It can excite no surprise that creatures about which such things are said, should be favourites in every country where they are found. Among Mahomedans more especially the stork is so welcome a visitor, that it is privileged to build its nest in any spot it may choose to select. Its habitation is held sacred, nor does it fail to show by its confiding tameness that it understands the friendly footing on which it has been placed. It, moreover, repays the consideration it receives by waging incessant war against snakes, and other kinds of vermin. In Holland the stork is held in such reverence that it is protected by law. All travellers in that part of the world must have observed its solemn, statue-like figure perched on roof or gable. There was a certain stork whose fame has spread far beyond its native Holland, as an example of devotedness to its offspring. It had taken up its quarters in Delft, and had the misfortune to build its nest on a house which was subsequently burnt down during a fearful conflagration. As the fire raged around the nest, the poor stork was seen anxiously yet vainly endeavouring with her wings to protect her young. Nearer and nearer swept the flames, the thatch crackled and blazed, but in spite of suffering the faithful mother would not desert her post, and perished with her young ones.

"The pelican is another bird whose affection for its young has become proverbial. It is a dexterous fisher, catching up with sure aim its finny prey, which it deposits for a time in the elastic mouth-bag formed by the loose skin under the lower mandible, until it can be conveniently conveyed to the nest. Tradition long would have it that the affection of the pelican for its young induced it in periods of scarcity to lacerate its breast in order to feed them with the blood. Later observation, however, has shown this to be an error, arising from the habit which the bird has of pressing the mouth-pouch against its breast for the purpose of emptying its occasionally red-tinged contents into the nest. The pouch itself exhibits an ingenious contrivance of nature, by which she provides for the easy transport of food-supplies to the young pelican brood."

CENTRAL TRUTHS. By the Rev. CHARLES STANFORD. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row, E.C.

"THIS book," say the Author, "was first published ten years ago, and subscribed as a token of affectionate respect to the Rev. Edward Steane, D.D.

The Author, being at that time his colleague in the ministry at Denmark Place, Camberwell. "The discourses were not intended to form a consecutive series, and the title 'Central Truths' was given to them collectively, because, although they are miscellaneous, they all mainly aim to set forth those elementary doctrines of the Gospel from which all others seem to radiate and grow." The volume comprises thirteen discourses; the subjects of which are, Foundation Stones; The Apostle's Doctrine; The Apostle's Fellowship; The Unction from the Holy One; Prevalent Errors on Justification Considered; Our Unction within the Veil; The Tempted High Priest; The Causes of Unsuccessful Prayer; Peculiar Hindrances to the Efficacy of Social Prayer; The Eleventh Commandment; The Presence of God our Rest; Sowing on the Waters; Solemn Troops, and Sweet Societies. We are glad to find that the work has reached the third thousand, and repeat our high appreciation and strong recommendation of it.

THE OPEN SECRET. Sermons by the late Rev. A. J. MORRIS, formerly of Holloway. London: Arthur Miall, 18, Bouverie Street, E.C.

THIS work contains seventeen sermons. They are, alas, posthumous. The selection for the press of these discourses, we are told, were made after the author's death, and it is doubtful whether he even intended them for publication. We have so recently expressed our high appreciation of Mr. Morris as a sermoniser, that it is scarcely necessary for us to characterise or recommend these discourses. "They have all his mark and superscription." They can scarcely be mistaken for the utterances of any other man. The thoughts are remarkably original, and distributed with great philosophic skill. The style, though very sententious, is as clear as crystal. The spirit is catholic and devout, with here and there gleams of humour and sarcasm. The biographic sketch by Mr. Kingsley is well written, discriminative, and faithful. As a volume of sermons, it must be placed in the highest class. Elsewhere we have given a specimen of the author's skill in developing the truths of the text.

PUBLIC PRAYER (A Pamphlet). By an Independent Minister. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

THE method of conducting the devotional services in Dissenting chapels is a subject of deep and all but universal complaint. Of the dullness, the tautology, the coldness, and in some cases the irreverence of Dissenting worship, we are constantly hearing. Every now and then articles in newspapers and pamphlets appear on the subject. The most enlightened Nonconformist ministers would like a liturgy, but few have the courage to advocate the change, and scarcely one the power to introduce such a thing into his congregation. This pamphlet, recognising the present evil, advocates with considerable argumentative power the introduction of a liturgy. He regards "THE BIBLICAL LITURGY" as the best extant, although he

indicates what he considers certain "minor defects and blemishes." The pamphlet is well worth reading.

CHRIST AND THE CONTROVERSIES OF CHRISTENDOM. By R. W. DALE, M.A. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.

THIS is an admirable discourse, delivered by an able man on what some consider a very grand occasion. We confess we do not care much for the subject, although we have a high appreciation of the scholarly, philosophical, and eloquent manner with which it is treated. The controversies of Christendom are only the dreams of morally diseased hearts. *Christ and the Moral depravities of Christendom* is a subject infinitely more important, and a subject that it behoves earnest Christian philosophers to go thoroughly into. The following passage is admirable:—

"My answer to the question how we are to meet the unbelief of our times is this—preach CHRIST.

"Let the world look on His face again, and hear His voice, and see whether the tide of battle will not turn, and a glorious victory be won. We know how marvellous was the spell which He exerted over all sorts of men when He was here. The rabbi came to Him by night; the woman that was a sinner crept to His feet and washed them with her tears; fishermen forsook their boats and their nets to follow Him; Zaccheus, the extortionate publican, climbed the tree to see Him pass by, and repented of all his rapacity as soon as Jesus entered his house; rich Pharisees asked Him to dine with them; the common people heard Him gladly; Herod desired to see Him; Pilate pronounced Him innocent; the officers who were sent to take Him said, "Never man spake like this man;" the thief on the cross became a penitent, and turning his eyes to the inscription which was hung in mockery above the head of the rejected and crucified peasant of Nazareth, cried, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." The ancient spell has not lost its power. In our great controversy with unbelief, our supreme argument for the authority of Christ is CHRIST Himself."

SEED SCATTERED BROADCAST. By S. McBETH. London: William Hunt and Company, Holles Street, Cavendish Square.

THIS book is edited by the Author of the *Memorials of Captain Hedley Vicart*, and the life of Rev. N. Marsh, D.D. It consists of records in a Camp Hospital. These incidents are very stirring and varied, told with great vigour for the highest of all ends, correcting the moral errors, and turning the spirits of men to truth, virtue, and God.

"THE MAN OF SIN." By the Author of "Short Arguments about the Millennium." London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

WE confess we do not feel much interest in this discussion. Although the author writes with intelligence, vigour, and manifest sincerity.



A HOMILY

ON

The New Heaven and the New Earth.

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth.”—Rev. xxi. 1.



It is not surprising that the future destiny of the material world should be a subject on which men's minds dwell with increasing interest. Many of the older divines held tenaciously to the idea that the whole physical universe is to be destroyed, while some restricted their belief so far as to assign the earth only to annihilation. It is not perhaps to be wondered at that in former days such views as these should have obtained universal credence. There were two reasons why it should be so. As yet Christian men had scarcely begun to discover how much of the language of Scripture is to be taken in a figurative, and not in a literal sense. The discoveries of modern science, and the researches of Eastern travellers, have added so immensely to our means of unlocking the metaphors of Scripture, that we have at length arrived at a very advanced stage on the road

to a more liberal, and at the same time a more correct interpretation of the Word of God. Men have discovered that many passages which were long held in all their bare literalness, are now unquestionably to be rendered by the aid of Oriental imagery and similitude; and hence has arisen the admission that many other passages may require to be so dealt with before we shall really discover what is "the mind of the Spirit."

And beyond all this, the old theories which assigned to the earth a brief existence of some six thousand years—theories based not on the Mosaic record of the creation, but on the interpretation which fallible men had chosen to put upon that record; these theories are now all exploded by the researches and the discoveries of geology. We have ceased to regard the globe as a new creation, destined to play but a brief part in the drama of the universe; and we have learned to read, in the records of Almighty handiwork, the history of untold ages, through which the earth passed between "the beginning" and the creation of man. Hence we no longer look upon the earth, with its manifestations of Almighty wisdom and power, as destined to be annihilated, while as yet the very alphabet of the Divine workmanship is still unlearned. The members of this school are happily becoming fewer; and with a constant widening of the field of our spiritual vision, we may ere long hope to see them all depart.

Intimately associated with this problem as to the future of the material world, is that of the probable future destiny of the human race. This is a subject which is occupying the most earnest and solemn thoughts of some of the wisest of our Christian thinkers. And when we remember that we have had to enlarge our views on many important points in proportion as we have added to our knowledge of the Sacred Writings, we should be guilty of the boldness of self-sufficient ignorance, if we were to say that we have nothing new to learn on this head.

It is this tenacious conservatism of thought which resists the introduction of new ideas, and starts back in horror at a new theory, that, in this age of stirring intelligence and mental activity, is keeping out of the Church of Christ hundreds of sincere inquirers, whose questionings and aspirations are cruelly and ruthlessly stifled by the cry of "heresy!" He is the true friend of the truth who courts fearlessly the fullest inquiry into the basis on which it rests, and who is willing to submit his theses to the most crucial of tests. Since God is the source of all wisdom, it is impossible that the dissemination of knowledge can militate against his cause. The spread of information must result in change. It cannot be but that old prejudices and antiquated notions must fly before it, just as the mists disappear before the rising sun. It is only where these prejudices have been mistaken for God's truth, and where the traditions of men have been enthroned instead of the Word of the Lord, that the entrance of knowledge will occasion commotion. Where truth is already enshrined in the heart, the entrance of light will only cause that truth to shine with the greater brightness. We therefore say :—

"Make knowledge circle with the winds;
But let her herald, reverence, fly
Before her to whatever sky
Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

"Meet is it changes should control
Our being, lest we rust in ease.
We all are changed by still degrees,
All but the basis of the soul."

These preliminary observations lead us naturally to the remark, that ripened thought and reflection necessarily produce ideas concerning the future destiny of the race widely differing from the crude notions which have so generally prevailed in former ages. It is not too much to say that the almost universal opinion a century ago was that the earth

could not possibly be the abode of other than sinful creatures ; and there are still not a few who appear to connect the material creation in some way with the perpetuation of evil. Dr. Chalmers (although not the first to break through the trammels of this ancient notion) has in his own felicitous language refuted the slender grounds upon which it is based. " We know historically (says he) that earth, that a solid material earth, may form the dwelling of sinless creatures, in full converse and friendship with the Being who made them." Men who entertain the idea that evil is somehow or other mysteriously and inseparably connected with materialism, forget that we have the verdict of God Himself on His own creation. Of all that His hands made, it is said the Lord " saw that it was good." Since, then, there is no essential connection between the material universe and the evil which has marred its beauty ; and since it is possible for man to have had a celestial character while he was still terrestrial in respect to condition, we see no reason to confine our ideas of heaven to the dreamy and etherial conceptions of sentimental minds.

" What is the heaven our God bestows ?
No prophet yet, no angel knows ;
Was never yet created eye
Could see across eternity ;
Not seraph's wing, for ever soaring,
Can pass the height of souls adoring,
That nearer still and nearer grow
To unapproachèd love, once made for them so low."

" And I saw a new heaven and a new earth." These words strongly suggest to us that *our future state of being will partake very largely of a material character*. That is, we shall not exist in an invisible, impalpable condition, floating in ether, as some have fancifully supposed, or mysteriously suspended upon nothing. The words " earth " and " heaven," in Rev. xxi. 1, unquestionably relate to an organised creation as literal and as real as that which " in the

beginning" sprang into being at the word of His mouth, and was afterwards beautified and peopled after His own pleasure. "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." By this latter expression Peter testifies to his belief that the new Cosmos will be peopled by intelligent and responsible beings. "Righteousness" is scarcely a phrase which would be applied to a region inhabited by soulless beings. The earth which shall be trodden by the feet of the "workers of righteousness," and the air which shall be resonant with their songs of triumph, will be as material as that earth and that heaven at the creation of which the morning stars sang together. The necessities of the case require that this should be so. The body is not thrown aside for ever, as if it were a needless encumbrance to the soul. The body returns to the dust from whence it came; but it is to be recalled thence, and in its renewed and glorified being is to be inseparably united to the soul. That Christ "was found in fashion as a man" was as true of His resurrection body as of that which was nailed to the cross and laid in Joseph's tomb. To His disciples who, when they saw Him after His resurrection, were affrighted and supposed that they had seen a spirit, He replied, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." Therefore, we repeat, the necessities of the case require that this should be so. There is to be a material earth that it may be inhabited, and there is to be a material atmosphere in which the organs of respiration may discharge their life-sustaining functions. That "in Him we live and move, and have our being," is no mere figurative expression. Who is it that said, "Our souls are His immortal breath?" The phrase is poetical but true. "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." The soul and body are not two antagonistic beings, to be severed and divorced for all eternity. They are sepa-

rated by death to be re-united at the resurrection. The soul is

“an emanation of eternal light,
Ordained 'midst sinking worlds our dust to fire,
And shine for ever when the stars expire.”

Again, we infer from the Word of God that our *occupations in a future state will be greatly influenced by material things*. It would be unreasonable to attribute to the future life an entire absence of all those warm and sensible accompaniments which give expression and force to our present being. Or if there be a hesitating admission that those things will still exist in a degree, is it not supposed by some that they will be attenuated into a sort of spiritual element, with which none of our present feelings can possibly have any sympathy? But Christ came not to destroy those feelings within, which are not of the nature of sin. He did not come to take away all taste for the beautiful in nature, but to refine and elevate those powers by which we apprehend and appreciate the lovely and the sublime. He did not come to destroy the affections, but He came to sanctify and purge them of all that was only sensual, that they might develop themselves in all the expansiveness of pure and devoted friendship, and universal love. He came not to quench the thirst of the soul for knowledge, but to clear away from the mental vision all that could obscure, and to strengthen its powers, so that nothing in the entire range of God's great universe should be placed beyond its reach.

Our capacity for investigating the works of God will not merely remain undestroyed, but be developed so as to meet the requirements of the new state of being. Who that has experienced the thrill of pleasure which animates the soul at the contemplation of some new display of creative skill, does not respond to the assertion that such a feeling is more than an earthly one? Who that has spent much of his time communing with the world of nature, but has felt himself lifted far above the trivialities of a sinful life into a nobler

and a holier existence, as he has seen God alike in the sun and in the tiniest dew-drop that reflects its rays? Who that has so read, even the simplest line of God's authorship but has been led to cry—

“There's nothing bright above, below,
From flowers that bloom to stars that glow,
But in its light my soul can see
Some feature of thy deity.”

Let it be remembered, that all these things were made for man's use, and were placed under man's authority. “Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands.” But have we fully apprehended the scope of that “dominion?” Have we rightly understood what is meant by having all things “put under our feet?” When we have made the material world minister to our wants; when we have gathered to our tables the produce of all lands, and when we have culled from the beauties of nature for the adornment of our homes;—nay, further, when we have made the steam-power print for our use the ripest thoughts of the greatest minds, and when we have girdled the earth with an electric band, so that words of hearty friendship may be flashed as in a moment to the uttermost ends of the world;—when we have done all this, have we yet put the works of Omnipotence to their highest use? Are there not fields yet to be entered, regions yet to be explored, treasures yet to be discovered, harvests yet to be reaped? And as the days of our years on earth pass with the swiftness of a weaver's shuttle, are we not warranted in the anticipation that the renovated powers of the glorified soul shall be devoted to the accomplishment of these ends?

But as we thus read of a new heaven and a new earth, we anticipate future opportunities to *unravel the perplexities of a Divine providence*. Painfully treading the path by which God leads us here, we have often to enter into the feelings of the Psalmist when he said, “clouds and darkness are round about him.” It has always been one of the most difficult

tasks of life to say, 'It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good.' It is easy work when we move with the singing birds, and with bright June days shining on our way ; but when the hour of darkness comes, and when crushed by sorrow we sink to earth in deadly sickness of soul, we can't read, for blinding tears, those words "all things work together for good to them that love God." Is there to be no unravelling of these tangled skeins ? Are these mysteries of His providence to be buried in the darkness of the grave to remain for ever unsolved and unrevealed ? Nay, it cannot be. They are but links of one great chain, the end of which He holds in His eternal hand, and in the eternal future we shall trace the missing links. The ways of God are not to be measured by the standard of our present fleeting life. He, the great actor, is eternal ; we upon whose souls He exercises power are eternal too ; and for the full development of His purposes there will be the eternity of the "new heaven and the new earth."

Again, the new earth, with its new and sinless life, will afford *opportunity for the more perfect comprehension of the mysteries of grace.* There is a passage in the writings of Paul which is often quoted as if it had reference solely to his own personal growth in grace. We allude to that verse in the third of Philippians, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect : but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Does this mean merely that Paul longed to attain a position of spirituality which as yet he had not reached ? Or does it not also show him to be conscious of deep and hidden *knowledge* of Christ's purpose in his salvation, which here or hereafter he might hope to gain ? Not until we have come to the enjoyment of the full results of redemption shall we be able to form a judgment concerning the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of that love by which our redemption was secured. If salvation were merely deliverance from death, it were easier to comprehend

its meaning ; but since it is much more—since it ensures an eternal life of sinlessness—a life in which the powers of man will continue unimpaired by sin and unfettered by a consciousness of guilt ; then we say it will be only in the eternal exercise of those powers that we can possibly hope to “ apprehend that for which also we are apprehended of Christ Jesus.”

But time would fail us to follow out the thoughts which such an interpretation of this subject suggests to the contemplative mind. It opens up boundless fields for profitable meditation, and at the same time affords glimpses of a destiny glorious beyond conception. It provides that which stills the anxious beating of the troubled heart, and promises to satisfy all the cravings of the immortal soul. “ I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness ! ”

Dawlish.

REV. F. WAGSTAFF.



THE WORLD: GOD'S USE OF IT.

THIS world, small as it is, is made use of by the Creator to illustrate principles in His government, “ to the intent that now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places may be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God.” That this world is the smallest but two in the planetary system, is no more a valid objection to its being used for infinite purpose of wisdom, than it would be to object to the size of the slate on which La Place wrought out his logarithms for his “ *Mecanique Celeste*.” God is solving problems in this world with sin, the results may enter into the practical knowledge of unnumbered worlds, as the answers to problems are transferred to books of navigation and are the confidence of them that are afar off upon the sea. Our own Lexington and Bunker Hill were not too small for transactions which brought this nation into being. Nor did one field in Waterloo prove too small to have the destiny of one-half of Europe decided there. The Cross of a Redeemer has stood there, things are associated with it which we are told “ angels desire to look into.”—N. ADAMS.

END OF THE WORLD.

“ To thousands this is no fiction—no illusion to an over-heated imagination. To-day, to-morrow, every day, to thousands, the end of the world is close at hand. And why should we fear it ? We walk here as it were in the crypts of life ; at times, from the great cathedral above us we can hear the organ and the chanting of the choir ; we see the light stream through the open door, when some friend goes up before us, and shall we fear to mount the narrow staircase of the grave, that leads us out of this uncertain twilight into the serene mansions of life eternal ? ”—LONGFELLOW.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

OUR PURPOSE.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this TEHILIM, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character, and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil. — (2.) ANNOTATIONS of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur. — (3.) The ARGUMENT of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning. — (4.) The HOMILETICS of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

SUBJECT: *A Song of Thanksgiving in Review of a Troublous Life.*

“I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.
 The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer;
 My God, my strength, in whom I will trust;
 My buckler, and the horn of my salvation,
 And my high tower.
 I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised:
 So shall I be saved from mine enemies.
 The sorrows of death compassed me,
 And the floods of ungodly men made me afraid;
 The sorrows of hell compassed me about;
 The snares of death prevented me.
 In my distress I called upon the Lord,
 And cried unto my God:
 He heard my voice out of His temple,
 And my cry came before Him, even into His ears.
 Then the earth shook and trembled;
 The foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken,
 Because He was wroth.

There went up a smoke out of his nostrils,
And fire out of His mouth devoured :
Coals were kindled by it.
He bowed the heavens also, and came down :
And darkness was under His feet.
And He rode upon a cherub, and did fly ;
Yea, He did fly upon the wings of the wind.
He made darkness His secret place ;
His pavilion round about Him were dark waters and thick
clouds of the skies.
At the brightness that was before Him
His thick clouds passed ;
Hail-stones and coals of fire.
The Lord also thundered in the heavens,
And the Highest gave His voice ;
Hail-stones and coals of fire.
Yea, He sent out His arrows, and scattered them ;
And He shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.
Then the channels of waters were seen,
And the foundations of the world were discovered
At Thy rebuke, O Lord,
At the blast of the breath of Thy nostrils.
He sent from above, He took me,
He drew me out of many waters.
He delivered me from my strong enemy,
And from them which hated me :
For they were too strong for me.
They prevented me in the day of my calamity:
But the Lord was my stay.
He brought me forth also into a large place ;
He delivered me, because He delighted in me."

(Psa. xviii. 1—19.)

HISTORY.—David was undoubtedly the author of this Psalm, and the cause of its composition is scarcely open to doubt. It was not occasioned by any particular event in his history, but by a review of his long, chequered, and troublous life. It was composed in his last years, when his troubles had passed away, and when surrounding nations had become his tributaries and distant nations hastened to do him homage. It is a fervent out-pouring of gratitude, not for any single deliverance, but for all the deliverances of his tried and stormy life. The other copy of this Psalm, which is found recorded at the close of his history, 2 Sam. xxii., is sufficient to authorize this conclusion. The

difference in the form and substance of the text of each copy is no more than the alteration that an author often makes when he writes a second copy of his productions. Probably the copy here is the original production. In reviewing his life, in recounting its terribly painful events, his deliverance from Saul would naturally occur to him as one of the most momentous, and worthy of a grateful remembrance. This was a deliverance which was the herald of his future glory, and the most remarkable interposition of the providence of Heaven. Hence there may be in this song such occasional references as to justify the title, "A Psalm of David, the servant of the Lord, who spake unto the Lord the words of this song in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul."

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 1.*—"I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength"—I will love Thee, Jehovah, my strength. The idea is, I will not only love Thee now, but will love Thee for ever.

Ver. 2.—"The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer." "The first two figures. 'my rock,' and 'my fortress,' contain an allusion to the physical structure of the Holy Land, as well as to David's personal experience. The caves and fissures of the rocks with which the land abounded, had often afforded him shelter and concealment when pursued by Saul. (See Judges vi. 2; 1 Sam. xxiv. 3; 2 Sam. v. 7.)" "*The horn of my salvation.*" This means the instrument of my safety. The horn is the animal's natural protector, his shield and defence. In allusion to this, David speaks of the Lord as his "horn." (Psa. xxii. 21; lxxv. 4, 5, 10; xcii. 10; cxxxii. 13; cxlviii. 14.) "*My high tower.*" The Hebrew word denotes a place so high as to be beyond the reach of danger. The same word is rendered "refuge" in Psa. ix. 9.

Ver. 3.—"I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised." The idea is, that he would constantly call upon the Lord, "who is worthy to be praised." Or more literally, Him who is to be praised I will call upon—Jehovah.

Ver. 4.—"The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid." Alexander's translation of this is, "The bands of death have enclosed me, and the streams of worthlessness still affright me."

Ver. 5.—"The sorrows of hell compassed me about." In the margin the word *cords* is put for "sorrows." Luther, Delbette, Alexander, and Hengstenberg, render the word bands. "*Hell,*" Sheol, not the place of punishment, but the under world, the

regions of the dead. "*The snares of death.*" The word "snares," refers to the nets or gins for taking wild beasts and binding them fast. "*Prevented me.*" This word with us now would mean hindered, but here it means going before, anticipating.

Ver. 6.—"In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: He heard my voice out of His temple, and my cry came before Him, even into His ears." "The word rendered 'temple' cannot refer to the Temple at Jerusalem, for that was built after the death of David, but it refers either to *heaven*, considered as the temple, or dwelling place of God, or to the *tabernacle*, considered as His abode on earth. The sense is not materially varied, whichever interpretation is adopted."

Ver. 7.—"Then the earth shook and trembled." From this verse to the 17th we have a description of God's operations in nature, more magnificent than can be found in any other language or book. Elsewhere David had described the commotions of nature in a storm, to portray the omnipotence of God. Here he employs the imagery of a tempestuous scene as a vehicle to convey to himself and others the lessons of his eventful life, "from its rise amongst the sheepfolds to its close in the midst of the glories of a prosperous reign." The Bible not unfrequently refers to tempests as illustrative of the majesty and power of God. (Psa. cxliv. 5—7; xlv. 6—8; xxix.; Job xxvii. 21—24; xxxviii. 1; Nahum i. 3; Hab. iii. 16.) "*The foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken.*" So tremendous was the tempest that the most settled things of the world, the hills, were "shaken." "*Because He was wroth.*" Literally because it was inflamed to him.

Ver. 8.—"There went out a smoke out of His nostrils." There seems to be an allusion here to the scene on Sinai. (Exod. xix.) God's indignation was excited against wrong, and all nature was in fury and in flame. The allusion is to the fact that in a tempest the heavens seem to come near to the earth, the clouds sweep the ground, heaven's thunders are on your ear, and its lightnings play about your feet.

Ver. 10.—"He rode upon a cherub and did fly." "The cherubim of the Mosaic system were visible representations of the whole class of creatures superior to man. The singular form 'cherub' seems to be used here to convey the indefinite idea of a superhuman but created being. The whole verse is a poetical description of God's intervention as a scene presented to the senses. As earthly kings are carried by inferior animals, so the heavenly king is here described as borne through the air in his descent by beings intermediate between Himself and man." (*Alexander.*)

Ver. 11.—“*He made darkness His secret place, His pavilion round about Him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.*” The darkness of the tempest hid him.

“Now He wrapped Himself in darkness,
Clouds on clouds enclosed Him round.”—HERDER.

“*Pavilion*” means tent. (Psa. xxvii. 5; xxxi. 20.) His abode was in “dark waters and thick clouds.” “Dark waters” a graphic description of clouds charged with rain, black.

Ver. 12.—“*At the brightness that was before Him His thick clouds passed.*” The lightning flash cleaved the clouds and dispersed them. The whole heavens were ablaze so that no clouds could be seen. Hailstones descended, which is not uncommon in a storm. “*And coals of fire.*” The lightnings kindled fire on the earth. Lightnings have often set houses on fire.

Ver. 13.—“*The Lord also thundered in the heavens.*” Thunder is often described in Scripture as the voice of God. (Psa. xxix.; Job xl. 9; 1 Samuel i. 10; xii. 18; Psa. lxxvii. 18; Job xxxvii. 4.)

Ver. 14.—“*Yea, He sent out His arrows and scattered them: and He shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.*” The “lightnings” in the last clause explains the “arrows” in the first. “Lightnings” are like “arrows,” hence we speak of forked lightnings.

Ver. 15.—“*Then the channels of water were seen.*” The idea meant to be conveyed by this description is that of a sudden and complete subversion, the turning of the whole earth upside down. The language is not designed to describe any physical change. “*And the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke.*” The world is elsewhere described as having a foundation. Isa. xli. 19; Zec. i. 9; Prov. viii. 29; Job xxxviii. 4.)

Ver. 17.—“*He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me.*” Here, dropping poetry and descending into the region of prose, he states that the effect of God’s interposition was his complete deliverance.

ARGUMENT.—These verses embrace the following subjects. (1.) A general acknowledgment of God, and thanks to Him as the Deliverer in the time of troubles, and as worthy to be praised. (Vers. 1—3.) (2.) A brief description of the troubles and dangers from which the psalmist has been rescued. (Vers. 4, 5.) (3.) A description conceived in the highest forms of poetic language, of the Divine interposition in times of danger. (Vers. 6—19.)

HOMILETICS.—In this section of the Psalm we have three things, *a life greatly troubled, a God equal to all emergencies, a soul alive with true sentiments.*

I. A LIFE GREATLY TROUBLED. "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid. The sorrows of hell compassed me about, the snares of death prevented me." These words contain four facts concerning—

First: *They were worthless.* Ungodly men, in the margin "Belial," a name for the worthless and the ungodly.

Secondly: *They were numerous.* "They compassed him about," they surrounded him on all hands, watching their opportunity to injure and destroy.

Thirdly: *They were violent.* Like the "floods," turbulent and all but resistless.

Fourthly: *They were indefatigable.* They were laying snares for Him in every direction; they went before Him, made arrangements for his destruction. This is no overcharged picture: "With Saul's javelins flying at his head in the palace, or his best troops scouring the wilderness in search of him, with Syrian hosts bearing down on him like the waves of the sea, and a confederacy of nations on every side plotting to swallow him up, he might well speak of the waves of death and the cords of Hades. Plainly he means to describe the most extreme misery and peril that can be conceived, and to encourage the belief that there is no depth of evil beyond the reach of God's arm when sought in earnest prayer.

Though the lives of all men may not be so troublous as that of David's, yet in every life there is trial, there is a sense in which "man is born to trouble." What man is there who has not felt the cup of life to be often bitter, the voyage of life to be often tempestuous. Our sufferings grow out of our physical constitution, our social relationships, our moral delinquencies and remorse.

II. A GOD EQUAL TO ALL EMERGENCIES. God seemed to appear to David in his trials in a two-fold aspect—*passive and active*, resting as a "Rock," and moving as a Thunderstorm.

First: *God appeared to him as his all-sufficient protector.* His "rock," his "fortress," his "strength," his "buckler," his "horn," his "high tower." He felt that "God was his refuge, and a very present help in time of need." A refuge *impregnable, ever accessible, and everlasting.* So is God at all times to His people.

Secondly: *God appeared to him as his triumphant deliverer.* The description of God moving for his deliverance is grandly poetic. "Then the earth shook," &c. (Read from verse 7 to 17.) We make two remarks upon this poetic description. (1.) It was natural. David had a poetic temperament, he had genius. Few men were endowed with deeper feelings and loftier imagination than he. When a great soul is deeply excited, its utterances are always figurative. It makes rocks, hills, rivers, oceans, stars, its words, its vehicles through which to pour out that which is within, and which after all is amongst the "unutterable things of life." Another remark upon this poetic description is, (2.) It was religious. He does not ascribe the battling of the elements, the commotions of the world, the fury of the tempest, to what in our day men call the "laws of nature," but to God. All is full of Him. The dark clouds are the "smoke of His nostrils," the lightnings are the fire going "out of His mouth," "He bowed the heavens, also, and came down," &c. Three observations are here suggested concerning the description that is given of God moving towards his deliverance.

First: *It is a movement in answer to prayer.* "In my distress I called upon the Lord." "It is in heaven," says a modern writer, "as it is in a earthly house when an alarm is given that one of the children is in danger—drifting out, perhaps, in a boat into the sea: every servant in the house is summoned, every passer-by is called to the rescue, the whole neighbourhood is roused to the most strenuous efforts; so when the cry reached heaven that David was in trouble, the earthquake and the lightning, and all the messengers

of heaven were sent out to his aid: nay, these were not enough, God Himself flew, riding on a cherub, and was seen upon the wings of the wind. It is a fine illustration of the saying, 'Prayer moves the hand that moves the universe.' Not that prayer can induce God to do what He did not mean to do, but prayer and providence are adjusted to each other by a pre-established harmony; the breath of prayer turns the wheels of providence."*

Secondly: *It is a movement sublimely grand.* In the review of his life God's interposition on his behalf seemed to him as sublime as the grand tempest he portrays. Although no miracle had been wrought on his behalf, as in the case of Moses, Joshua, Elisha, Elijah, yet he saw God as clearly as if a miracle had taken place. God did not appear to Moses in the dividing of the sea, and the thunders and lightnings of Sinai, more clearly than He appeared to David as he reviewed his long and troublous history.

Thirdly: *It is a movement completely effective.* "He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters. He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me, for they were too strong for me."

III. A SOUL ALIVE WITH TRUE SENTIMENTS. What are the sentiments that David expresses in these verses?

First: *Love.* "I will love thee." Love to God is the essence of goodness, and the sum total of man's obligation. I will love thee supremely and for ever.

Secondly: *Trust.* "I will trust." This is connected with love. True love has respect to excellence, and will ever lead to trusting. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord."

Thirdly: *Praise.* "I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised." Worship is heaven.

* Blakie.

A Homiletic Glance at the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians.

The student is requested to keep in mind the following things, which will throw much light upon the Epistle. First: The circumstances of the writer when he wrote. He was a prisoner in Rome. During his residence there, in "his own hired house" (Acts xviii. 30, 31), from the spring A.D. 61 to 63, he wrote the Epistles to the Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and to the Ephesians. It is generally supposed that this Epistle to the Ephesians was the first he wrote during his imprisonment. Secondly: The circumstances of the persons addressed. They lived, it is thought, in Ephesus, an illustrious city in the district of Ionia, nearly opposite the island of Samos, and about the middle of the western coast of the peninsula commonly called Asia Minor. It had attained in Paul's day such a distinction as in popular estimation to be identified with the whole of the Roman province of Asia. It was the centre of the worship of the great goddess Diana. Paul resided here on two different occasions. The first, A.D. 54, for a very short period (Acts xviii. 19—21); the second, for a period of more than two years. The persons therefore addressed in this letter are those whom he had converted from paganism, and in whom he felt all the interest of a spiritual father. Thirdly: The purpose of the letter. The aim of the Epistle seems to be to set forth the origin and development of the Church of Christ, and to impress those Ephesian Christians, who lived under the shadow of the great temple of Diana, with the unity and beauty of a temple transcendently more glorious. For the minute critical exegesis of this apostolic encyclical, we direct our readers to the commentaries of Alford, Webster and Wilkinson, Jowett, Harless, Stier, Eadie, Hodge, and last, though not least, Ellicott. Our aim will be to draw out, classify, and set in homiletic order, the Divine ideas reached by the critical aid of such distinguished scholars.

SUBJECT: *The True Method of Studying Christianity.*

"But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."—Eph. iv. 20—24.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 20.*—"But ye have not so learned Christ." "But ye did not so learn Christ." (*Ellicott.*) Christ Himself is the great lesson in true theology. Acquaintance with *Him* is the highest indeed, the only true scholarship.

Ver. 21.—"If so be." "The particle *εἴγε* in no wise diminishes, but rather increases, the force of the admonition." "*Ye have heard Him.*" The *Him* is emphatic, heard *Himself*, not merely heard about Him. "*And have been taught by Him.*" Greek, taught in Him. "*As the* (in such a way as) *truth is in Jesus.*" As is truth in Jesus. There is no article in the Greek before "truth;" *ἀλήθεια* is here used, therefore, in its most universal sense. It stands for truth or reality itself; stands here especially opposed to all heathen vanities. (*Ver. 17.*)

It is truth in Jesus, not merely in nature, that we are to learn. "Christianity has been regarded as a republication of natural religion. The truths which are considered to belong to the latter are effectual only as they are viewed in immediate connexion with Jesus. Christianity is obedience, not to a principle or a rule, but to a Master; it is allegiance, not to a law or constitution, but to a Lord: it is conformity, not to an idea or discipline, but to the actions, dispositions, and character of a person." (*Webster and Wilkinson.*)

Ver. 22.—"That ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." "That ye must lay aside as concerns your former conversation the old man which waxeth corrupt according to the lusts of deceit." (*Ellicott.*) "The old man," the old moral character. (Rom. vi. 6.) This old character was "corrupt" and "deceitful." "The obvious allusion is to a change of clothing. To put off is to renounce, to remove from us, as garments which are laid aside. To put on is to adopt, to make our own. We are called upon to put off the works of darkness (Rom. xiii. 12); to put away lying (Eph. iv. 25); to put off anger, wrath, malice, &c. (Col. iii. 8); to lay aside all filthiness (James i. 21). On the other hand we are called upon to put on the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. xiii. 14, Gal. iii. 27); the armour of light (Rom. xiii. 12); bowels of mercy (Col. iii. 12); and men are said to be clothed with power from on high (Luke xxiv. 49); with immortality or incorruption, &c. (1 Cor. xv. 53). As a man's clothes are what strike the eye, so these expressions are used in reference to the whole phenomenal life—all those acts and attributes by which the interior life of the soul is manifested: and not only that, but also the inherent principle itself, whence these acts flow. For here we are said to put off 'the old man,' that is, our corrupt nature, which is old or original as opposed to the new man or principle of spiritual life. Comp. Col. iii. 9: 'Lie not one to another, seeing you have put off the old man with his deeds.' Rom. vi. 6: 'Knowing this that our old man is crucified with Him.' What is here called 'the old man,' Paul elsewhere calls himself, as in Rom. vii. 14: 'I am carnal.' 'In me there dwelleth no good thing' (ver. 18); or, 'law in the members' (ver. 23); or, 'the flesh' as opposed to the spirit, as in Gal. v. 16, 17.) This evil principle, or nature, is called 'old' because it precedes what is new, and because it is corrupt; and it is called 'man' because it is ourselves. We are to be changed, and not merely our acts. We are to crucify ourselves. This original principle of evil is not destroyed in regeneration, but is to be daily mortified in the conflicts of a whole life." (*Hodge.*)

Ver. 23.—"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind." "As there is no Greek for 'in,' which there is in the 17th verse, 'in the vanity of mind,' some translate with *Ellicott*, 'by the spirit of your mind,' τῷ πνεύματι is that which is the basis of νοῦς (intelligence, consciousness, reasoning faculty); the inward spiritual principle." (*Webster and Wilkinson.*)

Ver. 24.—“*And that ye put on the new man.*” “The Greek word *καὶνός* is different from that for *renewed*. (Ver. 23.) Put on not merely a *renewed* nature, but a new, *i.e.*, altogether *different* nature—a changed nature. (Col. iii. 10.)” P.C. “*Which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*” “Which after God’s image hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.” (*Ellicott.*) The element of the renewed man is true holiness, and stands opposed to the lusts of deceit.

HOMILETICS.—These verses, including those back to the seventeenth, contain a general exhortation to holiness. The exhortation takes two forms—the negative and the positive. The negative we have noticed in our previous article—verse 17 to 19; the positive is now before us. The subject is *the true method of studying Christianity*.

CHRISTIANITY is to be “learned.” It is not an inbred knowledge. Man has no intuitions about it. Nor is it a knowledge imparted in any way irrespective of the use of our faculties and means. It comes to a man as the result of “learning.” The man who does not rightly study, will never know it. But what is the *true* method of studying? This is our present question, a question which we shall endeavour to answer in the light of the passage before us.

I. THE TRUE METHOD OF STUDYING CHRISTIANITY REQUIRES THAT IT SHOULD BE STUDIED IN CHRIST. “Truth in Jesus.” Christianity must be looked upon as seen in Christ. First: *Not as seen in religious professors*. This would give a false view. Secondly: *Not as seen in religious books*. These would give a false view. Thirdly: *Not as seen in religious institutions*. These would give a false view. There is nothing cold in truth or narrow, as seen in Jesus, but all that is broad, warm, free, sublime.

II. THE TRUE METHOD OF STUDYING CHRISTIANITY REQUIRES THAT IT SHOULD BE STUDIED IN CONNECTION WITH CHRIST. We are “taught by Him,” or, as some translate it, taught in Him. Christ is the only effective Teacher of his own religion. If the sun is to be seen he must show himself—all the stars and moons of the universe cannot reveal him; so with Christ. But how are we to place ourselves under his tuition? Three things are necessary.

First: *We should realize our true moral relation to truth as it is in Him*. Truth in Him has a special relation to us not merely

as men, but as corrupt, guilty, and ruined sinners. We must feel ourselves to be the character to which it is specially addressed.

Secondly: *We must endeavour to identify ourselves with the particular class of character which it indicates.* "Truth in Jesus" has reference to special classes of sinners, such as the worldling, the formalist, the hypocrite, the inquirer, the penitent. We must put ourselves in the right class.

Thirdly: *We must invoke the aid of His Spirit.* Christ's body is not in the world, but His Spirit is. The bodies and souls of other great men have left the world—Plato, Seneca, &c. They are not with the students of their works, but Christ is. He is with all His students.

III. THE TRUE METHOD OF STUDYING CHRISTIANITY REQUIRES THAT WE SHOULD STUDY IT IN ORDER TO BE MADE CHRIST-LIKE. "Which after God" (that is, God's image) "is created in righteousness and true holiness." It is not to be studied for intellectual, ecclesiastical, secular, or professional purposes, but for moral end—studied in order to make us like God. The moral transformation is here indicated as consisting of two things.

First: *The renunciation of the old and corrupt character.* The "old man" is put off. (1.) Character is the *man*. It is *moral* character that makes the human animal a *man*. "As a man thinketh in heart so is he." His character forms his world, his heaven or his hell. (2.) A *sinful* character is the *old* man. It is old because it is the *first* character we get. This must be put off. Old principles, purposes, habits, motives, thrown away.

Secondly: *The adoption of a new principle of character.* "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind." Renewed in the central springs of being. The assimilation of our character to the grandest ideal which after God is created, and so on.*

* For a fuller amplification of the thought contained in this homiletic sketch, see HOMILIST, first series, vol. v., p. 328.

Germs of Thought.

SEMINAL SKETCHES OF DISCOURSES ON CHRIST'S LETTERS
TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA MINOR.

By the late Rev. CALEB MORRIS, being condensed notes of a sermon taken
down in short-hand when preached.

(No. VII.)

SUBJECT: *Christ's Letter to the Church at Philadelphia.*

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; 'These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.'" —Rev. iii. 7—13.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Forty-eighth.

THE meaning of Philadelphia is *brotherly love*. The city was in the province of Lydia, in Asia Minor, about seventy miles east of Smyrna. Its modern name is Allah-Shehr—city of God. It is supposed to contain a population of 15,000, and one-twelfth of whom are nominal Christians. Christ commends the Church of Philadelphia more than any of the other seven in Asia Minor, and it is the only one that survives the wreck of time. Gibbon says of her, "Among the Greek colonies and Churches of Asia, Philadelphia is still erect a column and a scene of ruins."

In this epistle the language is commendatory, there is not a word of censure. True moral strength was perhaps the characteristic excellence of this Church. Christ says, "Thou hast a little strength." This "little strength" was perhaps much as compared to that possessed by the other Churches. The letter leads us to consider two or three things concerning *true moral strength*.

I. ITS CONNECTION WITH CHRIST. First: *Christ recognises it*. "And to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia write: These things saith he that is true," &c. Glorious and faithful description of Christ is this. He is "*holy*." The holiness of Christ is the strongest argument for the divinity of the Gospel. He is "*true*." True in conception, sympathy, purpose, speech. He is The Truth. This Great Being recognises true moral strength in His disciples. He is *supreme*. He has "the key of David." He has absolute authority in admitting to and expelling from His kingdom.

Secondly: *Christ honours it*. "Behold I have set before thee an open door." The figure of an "open door" is of frequent use in Scripture, and particularly in the writings of St. Paul.* In all the places in which it occurs it is equivalent to our expression an *opening*. Christ is the key of all spheres, and he opens a sphere of usefulness for the morally strong.

Thirdly: *Christ imparts it*. All true moral strength is derived from Christ. Christ is this moral power. He is its source, its manifestation, its medium. We can neither understand or attain it but through Him. What moral strength He had! What power over *circumstances, society, temptation!* On the Cross He triumphed.

II. ITS INFLUENCE OVER ERROR. "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan which say they are Jews and are not, but do lie: behold I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee." These Jews were referred to in the letter to the Church in Smyrna. They were a heretical sect, either Judaizing Christians, or persecuting Jews. They belonged to the "synagogue of Satan." Satan had syna-

* 1 Cor. xvi. 9; 2 Cor. ii. 12, 13; Col. iv. 3; Acts xiv. 2.

gogues then, *and Satan has churches and chapels now.* What is said of these is, that they shall submit to the influence of the wordly strong Philadelphians. The general idea is, that false religion shall pay homage to the moral power of Christians. How is this done? The moral power of Christianity comes in contact with corrupt human nature in three forms:—

First: As a *morality*. It is a regulated system, and its laws commend themselves both to man's natural love of his own rights, and his natural love of his own interests.

Secondly: As an *institution*. The mind must have worship, must have a diet and a ritual of devotion. Christianity, as an institution, appeals to that.

Thirdly: As a *theology*. It is a system of belief, and thus appeals to man's craving after truth. There is a moral strength in Christianity, that will one day bring the unbelieving world to its "feet."

III. ITS FUTURE REWARD. First: *Preservation*. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation," &c. Those who are strong in truth and Christ, have ever been supported in trial, and ever will be. "As their day, so their strength shall be."

Secondly: *Visitation*. "Behold, I come quickly. "Come in His Spirit to strengthen and to guide. Come in death to usher into everlasting blessedness.

Thirdly: *Exaltation*. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple," &c. We are told by travellers, that at the present day amongst the ruins of Philadelphia, there are four strong pillars standing, which once supported the dome of the Church. Three ideas here. *Stability*—pillar. *Utility*—a pillar is a support. *Divinity*—"Write upon him the name of my God."



THE BYEWAYS OF THE BIBLE.—No. XX.

SUBJECT : *The Day of Small Things.*

“Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.”—Job viii. 7.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Forty-ninth.

THESE are the words of Bildad the Shuhite, the most mistaken, perhaps, of Job's friends. Yet he appears, in the present instance, to have apprehended a great truth, viz. : that small beginnings, in certain cases, are productive of great ends. Better authority than his, also, has recognised this same truth ; as for example, where the prophet warns the Jews (Zech. iv. 10.) not to “despise the day of small things,” and where our Saviour, in the parable of the Mustard Seed, compares the growth and spread of His Kingdom to the development of a tree from its seed. Amongst trees that are commonly known, it is said, none is so large compared to its seed as the Mustard Tree of the East. This exceptional proportion in the kingdom of nature is an ordinary thing in that of grace.

To make this principle useful to us, it will be desirable to consider, First : the conditions under which it holds good ; and so from this to ascertain, Secondly : some of the principal cases to which it applies.

I. The conditions of success, as we may call them, are very obvious and simple, though very easily overlooked. A pure motive seems the first. “He that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger.” It is “the path of the just which shineth brighter and brighter unto the perfect day” ; but evil men and seducers are to wax worse and worse, deceivers and being deceived.” Nor is the reason far to seek. A double aim rarely succeeds ; it is not in man's power to make it ; for although some extraordinary men, it is true, can do almost as much as two others in some one undivided and concentrated effort, no man can do as much as two others in two opposite directions. But the man who follows crooked ways is trying to do this ; he is aiming at two different objects, in both of which he is sure to be opposed,

(for what is not opposed in this world ?) and yet in both of which he can never employ so much as half of his strength. Is he likely to succeed ? Can his diminished power, in the great struggle for existence and pre-eminence, overcome, or even withstand, the enemies it creates ? The man who has only one aim has only one enemy to encounter. This gives an incomparable advantage to those who are "Israelites without guile."

Another "condition of success" may be found in the nature of the aim. Where we aim at that which is good—that which conduces to God's glory, or man's benefit, or to both—we have singular advantages on our side. Those who give intelligent attention to the waves and the tides, must often have observed occasions when the two are opposed—when all the waves, *e.g.*, are moving regularly (so far as they move at all) from the west ; and the whole set of the tidal current is steadily running towards the east. Every one who has observed this, knows also how unequal is the strife, and how the waves, with all their bluster, are sure to be overcome. For the waves are nothing, in fact, except bluster—they leave the great body of water where it was, just as the waves of the growing corn do the corn ; but the current is an actual transference of the many waters of the deep. There is a similar unseen but effectual current in the affairs of this world ; and a similar noisy, but ineffectual, succession of threatening waves. The waves are on the side of God's enemies ; they "cast up mire and dirt," but that is all. The current is on the side of his friends—of those, as we said above, who seek to do good. Be sure of it, therefore, that this current—so little seen, so much felt—so imperceptible to uninstructed sight, so real to the experienced mariner—will gain the day in the end.

One other condition of success, always infallible, if not always essential, is a distinct promise on our side. This is self-evident to true faith. What God promises, He predicts ; what He predicts, He performs. A promise, therefore, on his part is so sure of being performed, that, like one of these paper promises we call a bank note, it has a present value of its own. This is why we call the promises precious—they are precious because sure. And this is how it is, in actual practice, that we almost forget that the note is a mere promise, and receive it as readily as the coined gold, which is a promise, and something more. It would

be well for us if the leaves of the Bible were handled by us in like manner—as written promises to pay over to us in due time God's great gift of eternal glory. But in any case, it is clear that they are such; and that any of its promises which are applicable to our case, is a certain element of success. Consequently, in such a case, and in those before mentioned, a small beginning matters nothing. If the motive be pure, if the object be right, if the design be backed by a promise, such a small beginning is only small in one way; it is only small to the eye; in its implanted power and capability it is immense, in the strictest sense. It is like a tiny seed and a mountain. The tiniest seed in existence is a greater thing in its way. Leave it alone, and give it fair scope, and what will it do? It will create in due time a succession of forests, almost as large in actual magnitude as the largest mountain in the world, and far superior in everything else. The reason is very plain: God has not given to the mountains what He has given to the seed.

II. SOME OF THE SPECIAL CASES to which these considerations apply, are to be noticed in the next place. And the preaching of the Gospel in the world as a “witness,” is that which comes to hand first. How insignificant and small was its beginning. It is true that other religions also have prevailed widely from a small beginning, but they are only subordinate illustrations, so to speak; for they prevailed, so far as they did, from the modicum of Bible truth which they had in them as compared with the religions they displaced. Moreover, you cannot find any one of them in which the contrast has been so great—the contrast, I mean, between the seed and the tree. Thus, Buddhism and Christianity, for example, were each founded by one man; but the man in one case was a peasant, in the other was a prince. So Mohammedanism spread by conquering; Christianity, by being conquered. Brahminism, again, prevails in India, but in India alone, I believe; in all other lands it is an exotic which cannot maintain life; whereas Christianity holds sway, even if hated, among all the leading races of the world. There is no name amongst mankind, even now, when some affirm that Christianity is dying, like that of our Lord. Every nation, every religion, is agitated or disturbed by it in some way; or else

will be agitated or disturbed by it :—will be attracted or repelled, in a word, by the magnetic action of Christ's cross. But what a result from what a beginning ! A dead man, dying as a malefactor, there is the seed, "the grain of corn that falls to the ground." No living man able to say, "It is nothing to me"—there is the harvest that results !

Another undoubted case seems to be that of the growth of grace in the heart. Wherever our desire for this is pure and unfeigned, our design is undeniably good and acceptable, and has many great promises at its back. This is the especial promise, indeed, of the New Testament, "the promise of the Spirit," the promise that sin shall not have dominion over us, because we are not under the law, but under grace. This is one especial purpose, also, of God's chastisements, that we may be "made partakers of His holiness." Let no one, therefore, in this matter, despise the day of small things ; let no one be surprised not to find himself a full-grown Christian in one night. If in other respects your beginning seems right, it is all the better, if anything, for being small. You may often observe, in mere worldly conversions, conversions from one Christian communion or political party to another, the distinctions are so trifling or nominal, that there is little or no difference between veterans or recruits. The man has got a new uniform on—nothing more. He is just as much of a soldier, or just as little, as before. But in conversion to God this is not so. This is something more than a change of garment, or change of opinion on some difficult controversy, or even change of creed on important doctrines. It is, in addition to all these, a change of nature, a creation of a new principle, which revolutionizes all within man. This is the work of God's Spirit ; and this is gradual work, as a rule. It may be begun, as we say, under a sermon ; the seed may be sown, as it were, in a moment ; but you must not expect to see in that same moment the full-grown tree, the ripe fruit. Remember, if you are one of God's trees, that you are intended to flourish and bear fruit as long as eternity shall endure. You can hardly expect such timber to be grown in a day !

These illustrations appear the most important. Others, connected with various beneficent enterprises, for giving liberty to

the slave, or plenty to the poor, or knowledge to the ignorant, will readily suggest themselves to the mind. In the clash of opinion respecting some of them, it is a great comfort to feel assured, that if they are of men, they will come to nought, but, if of God, they will go on and increase on the principle of our text.

MATHEMATICS, M.A.



THE FOREIGN PULPIT.—No. XXII.

SUBJECT: *The Cross and the Lonely.*

“Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”—John xvi. 32, 33.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Fiftieth.

THE opening words of Jesus in verse 32 are not uttered at all in the tone of displeasure or anger. As regards the first half, there is no reproach of the disciples—the use of the passive form is decisive on this point; and as regards the second half, there is no indifference to the sympathy of His disciples in His passion betrayed, the contrary is decided by the prayer of the Lord in Gethsemane running thus, “continue and watch with me.”

Verse 32 contains a simple prophecy of a future fact: Jesus proclaims it to His disciples beforehand for the sake of their peace. Hence verse 33—setting forth the intention of this prophecy. The fate that would be His own, and that was now about to reveal itself, *loneliness*, would also be the future lot of His disciples.

In view of this He comforts them. *He* will be alone and yet *not* alone. *They* shall be alone and yet *not* alone. And here they are assured that they shall not be alone; that in their loneliness they shall have full peace. And this is assured them not simply by an express declaration, but by the very cross of the crucified One. *The Cross of Jesus our peace in loneliness.*

I. IN THE LONELINESS OF SORROW. First : Jesus knew that the cross was before Him, and He knew moreover that He would be alone ; for loneliness is the inseparable companion of sorrow. When He should be lifted up upon the Cross His disciples would not be able to follow Him. They did not understand His cross, and therefore had no corresponding sympathy with Him. He was loosed from their fellowship as we see from what occurred in Gethsemane ; they left Him in the deepest and fullest sense alone. The like thing holds in its measure of every sufferer. The stroke which hits us does not alight on our *head* simply ; it shatters, too, the fellowships in which we are rooted. We become scattered in reference to our own. We sink and lose ourselves in ourselves ; no one understands, can come really near to, us ; yes, and men have even an aversion from contact with us.

Secondly : But it is said that, though left alone in the loneliness of this sorrow, they are *not* alone. The Lord says first of all of Himself, " I am not alone, but the Father is with me." *The Father*—the best and truest fellowship. *Is with* me, not "in me" simply ; it points to the fellowship of immediate nearness ; it is not that He is omnipresent and the Redeemer's protection, but as the Father had before this showed the Son how *to act*, so now would He show Him how *to suffer*. *Is with* me—it is no longing simply, no mere hope, but a fact experienced and felt in all its reality. The same is the promise of Jesus to His own. With these words He does not comfort *Himself in their presence*, but comforts *them* in the face of coming tribulation. *In me* you have peace, *i.e.*, if you are in *me*, the Father will be with *you*. Because *Jesus Himself* was not forsaken of the Father ; none of those who are in Jesus can be forsaken of the Father.

II. IN THE SORROW OF LONELINESS. First : Although Jesus does not reproach the disciples with having left Him, yet He felt deeply the *sorrow of loneliness*. His complaint in Gethsemane is proof of this. This sorrow has a place in *our* life. We can pursue this in detail only with those who have weighed the words. (Compare Phil. ii. 20, 21 ; 2 Tim. iv. 10—16.)

Secondly : Our peace in this case, too, is in the same words,

“the Father is with me;” only that now light falls on them from another side, that is to say, the Father has the highest pleasure in me on account of those very circumstances which drive men from me. Jesus on the cross, the accursed of the world and the offscouring of men, is a sweet perfume before God. But in Him we have the same peace. If we have a living faith in Jesus, and hearty love to Him, we may be certain of the full pleasure of God, and when father and mother forsake us then the Lord will take us up and bring us into His heavenly kingdom.

DR. STEINMEYER,
Professor and University Preacher in Berlin,
By R. VAUGHAN PRYCE, M.A., LL.B.



SUBJECT: *The Godly Man.*

“The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.”—Job xvii. 9.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Fifty-first.

YOU have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord. According to the estimation of Jehovah—and He knew what was in him—Job was a particularly good man; and so it was permitted that he be peculiarly tried. God knew he could stand it, and purposed that it should work for his good. Job had confidence in his God, and said, “He knoweth the way that I take, and when I am tried I shall come forth as gold.” He spoke prophetically in the text—referring to the effect his case would have on the church in coming ages. He reckoned that the church in trial, temptation, and conflict, would look back upon the deliverances God had wrought for him, and notwithstanding “heaviness through manifold temptations,” and all other oppositions from earth and hell—having believed “they would not make haste,” but exercising confidence in Him who is Almighty to save, they would hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering, being fully persuaded

that God is able to keep that which they have committed unto Him. So it has been, and so it will be to the end of time.

The character in the text: Necessity of ascertaining our character, because upon character depends whether we have, or have not, a claim to the exceeding great and precious promises.

I. HE IS RIGHTEOUS. The character in the text is right with God. Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. The penitent sinner believes in Christ Jesus for pardon—is justified by faith, and has peace with God. God justifies him in righteousness, through faith in the righteous One, and makes him inwardly and outwardly righteous; one of the first lessons he learns in the school of Christ is to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, he trusts in Christ alone for pardon and acceptance, and there is a sense in which he stands as clear before heaven as though he had never sinned.

He is pure in his heart. Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27, has received its fulfilment in his heart's experience—the tender heart is given—the law of God is written in that heart, the spirit of God fills him, and is the great moving power to action. This righteousness is not some fancied robe covering over a rotten heart, but it is an inward principle and purifying power. He is not perfect in knowledge, and error here may lead to mistakes in practice, but in his inmost soul he is loyal to God—amid the severest trial he can say with Job, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." And further, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord."

II. HE IS HOLY. He has "clean hands." The hand is the instrument of action; it is moved by the heart—the pulsations of which are right, and so he can lift them up to God "without wrath or doubting." He is not afraid for God to see them, nor for Him to know the principles whence these actions emanate. A man has just as much religion in his business as he has in his closet; the same in the counting-house as he has on his knees. There is no reason why labour should not be a psalm, and commerce a ritual in the best sense of the word. Even in Sardis there were some who had not defiled their garments. All legitimate business can be conducted for the glory of God. Even a politician may truthfully say, "These

hands are clean." The slave trade, and the drink trade, appear to be essentially foul, and their aiders and abettors must look to the state of their hands before heaven. The time shall come when "holiness to the Lord," shall be written upon the bells of the horses; and then, whether men eat or drink; or whatsoever they do, they "do all for the glory of God." So much for the character of the text. Remark we now on,

III. HE IS PERSISTENT. "He shall hold on," &c. At an important period of his existence, Gibbon said of his prospects, "All is dark and doubtful." Of this character's future, all is bright and hopeful—"Glory, honour, immortality, eternal life," are in the future.

"He shall hold on his way." The wind, and tide, and sea may be against the steamers which reach your port, but through the power of the steam within, they hold on their way. Outward circumstances may appear to be all against the character of the text; but by the power of the principle within, he "holds on his way." This is a moral duty. Final perseverance is an article for the code, rather than for the creed. As a cold and dead dogma in the creed, it may lead to evil and to hell; but as a moral duty it leads to stimulus and action, and eventually to heaven. In our theology, the perseverance of the saints is perseverance in goodness, and he whose creed does not lead to that, has a "lie in his right hand." This is a law of the Divine life. The leaven is put in to leaven the whole lump. You must go on, or recede; you cannot stand still. The purest water that ever fell from heaven will corrupt if it be stagnant, and your conversion may be as clear as that of the Apostle Paul, but you must make progress, or you will become a castaway. The Christian life is spent in wrestling and racing, and surely this implies activity and progress. This law will hold good in heaven. In that region, till all be known of God and all of the universe explored, holy souls will hold on their way in knowledge and holiness. Heaven stands pledged to aid you on your way. In studying the attributes and perfections of Jehovah—in thinking of His wisdom, power, and truth, you may say, these are mine, for I am an heir of God; they are mine to assist, for I am kept by

the power of God; the virtue of the Son's blood, the power of His name, and the prevalence of His intercession are on your side. He is praying for you, that your faith fail not. You are living under the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, and with all His power of sympathy and affection, he renders all possible aid to perfect you in righteousness. Well then may you say with the Apostle, "Who shall separate," &c.

"He shall be stronger and stronger." The house of Saul became weaker and weaker, but that of David became stronger and stronger. You are of the house of David's Son and David's Lord, and so you too shall be stronger and stronger. This is intimated in analogy. The babe and the man, the blade and the ear, the small mustard seed and the large tree, the acorn and the oak. All of Christianity was once in a manger, but now millions of men would die for Christ Jesus.

IV. HE IS GROWING. The Scriptures are decisive on this subject. (See Eph. iii. 17—21 ; 2 Peter i. 4—8.) The Bible beckons you onward to better things ; and by the worth of your soul, and the weight of your responsibility, urges you to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." This is also confirmed by experience. How terrible is the power of habit when associated with that which is evil. There is also a power in the habit of goodness. John the Baptist waxed strong in spirit ; and so did He who was heralded by him. The more you exercise faith, the easier you can do so. The more you do for God, the more delightful becomes such exercise ; and in every conflict with hell in which you conquer, you learn the tactics of war, and become mightier for further engagements.

Then what a bright vista opens before the soul which is morally right ! It doth not appear what you may be ; all heaven is interested in you, and stands pledged to help you forward. In order to realize the blessings indicated, you must get emptied of sin, and filled with the Holy Ghost. Get dead indeed to sin, and sanctified wholly at the outset of your Christian course, and then hold on your way. The lives of many professors may not appear to advantage when compared with these things. If their plants, trees, grain, and children grew not, they would become concerned. Should there be no concern about their own growth

in goodness? Their names may be on the class-book, but on God's book of remembrance they may be written backslider. How awful is such case, and indeed that of every unpardoned sinner!

G. WARNER.



SUBJECT: *The Root and Offspring of David.*

"I am the root and the offspring of David."—Rev. xxii. 16.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Fifty-second.

THE theme suggested by this title of Christ, which we have selected as the subject of our second meditation, is this: That Christ is *of* humanity, being associated with it in His nature and in His descent; that He comes forth out of the bosom of our race to be its true Prince, and that He is connected with the whole of its history, marshalling its progress onwards into a distant but glorious future.

I. THE TITLE IMPLIES THE ENTIRE IDENTIFICATION OF CHRIST WITH HUMANITY. The incarnation and the life of our Lord present Him distinctly to us as man. He was no phantasm who lay in the manger at Bethlehem, and left the imprint of his feet on the shores of Galilee's lake. But, to confirm our faith, we have not only the fact of his actual humanity, but also that of His human ancestry. Bone of our bone He is, and flesh of our flesh, not simply as having been found amongst us in fashion as a man, but as being descended from a common parent, as being a Brother in the self-same wide human family. The life-current which flowed through His veins was from the same fount as that which flows through ours. Not more truly are we the children of Adam than was He. "Christ's manhood is not unreal, because it is sinless; because the entail of any taint of transmitted sin is in Him cut off by a supernatural birth of a virgin mother." (*Liddon.*)

On turning to the record of His life on earth, the first thing on which our eye alights is "the book of the generations of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." From

Adam the ancestral chain stretches down to the great patriarch ; from him to David, the most shining and conspicuous link of the series ; from David to Mary and the babe of the manger. In this light we see the meaning of the primeval promise, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." What is the seed of the woman—mankind or Christ ? Both come within the scope of the expression. In the union of both lies the fulfilment of the promise. Not mankind unassisted shall achieve the victory ; mankind recoiling from the deadly blow ; mankind crushed and bleeding from the fall ; but mankind in the person of its representative Head. The certainty of final triumph for humanity rests on the fact of its vital union with Christ.

II. THE TITLE CONNECTS HIM WITH THE STREAM OF HUMAN HISTORY. We may expect to find traces of his presence amongst men even before the date of His actual manifestation in the flesh. We may look for something peculiar in the persons of His ancestors. And we know that a mysterious consciousness belonged to many of the members of His house and line. Some of them were prophets, and from them sounded out on the youth of the world sayings pregnant with distant meaning. They themselves were signs, types, representatives of Christ, until He Himself should appear. Abraham glimpses the day of Christ ; David expatiates in the prospect of the noon of His reign. In due time the picture thus faintly and far off outlined, came close to the eyes of the world. That life which the disciples saw and handled, and tasted, and felt, had stirred with strange pulsations the hearts of men in many preceding ages.

III. THE TITLE ESTABLISHES A UNITY IN THE HISTORY OF THE JEWISH NATION. Since, in the Divine counsels, it had been determined that the Redeemer should arise out of the bosom of humanity, some line must be necessarily selected as that of His descent. The line is that of the royal David, and this is the clue by which to traverse the maze of the world's history until the incarnation. The prophecies cluster round it. Even Balaam, who was not of Israel's pale, sees "a star rising out of Jacob, and a sceptre out of Israel." Nathan declares to David that God will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. David assumes, as his conscious right, the position of the great type-

man; and takes by prophetic forecast, the burden of Messiah's sufferings, the splendour of Messiah's royalty upon himself. Hence there is a unity in Jewish history, such as can be found in the history of no other people. They carried in their bosom the seed of the Messiah. Their nationality is constituted by this bond; their privileges gather and arrange themselves around this focus. The All-Holy presence was shrined in the midst of them, until its manifestation in the fulness of the times. Among all their distinctions, and they were many,—their privileges, and they were great,—the most illustrious was this, that of them Christ came according to the flesh, who is over all, blessed for ever.

IV. THE TITLE EMBODIES A REFERENCE TO THE KINGLY OFFICE OF CHRIST. The parallel is between David, the most glorious monarch that Israel had known, and his "greater son," the King of nations. The predictions already referred to pass in their scope beyond the sphere of a temporal sovereign, and can only be satisfied by an Eternal Person—the Ancient of Days. The promise to David is, "I will establish the throne of thy kingdom for ever." (2 Sam. vii. 13.) Such a constitution could not be asserted of any mere earthly kingdom; and nothing is left us to infer but that the promise was made to David in his representative character as type of another. The throne to be established for ever is the throne, in a spiritual sense, of the Son of David. With this view the other prophets concur. Their favourite representation is that of the King, whose reign shall be in peace, in truth, in equity, in righteousness for ever and ever. (Psa. lxxii. ; Isa. ii. 4, xlii. 1—4, lii. 13—15, lx. ; Dan. ii. 44, vii. 13, 14 ; Micah v. 1—4.) Such are the true glories of that dynasty of David, which is eternal only in the person of Christ, His Son.

V. The title alludes to THE VIGOROUS GROWTH, AND SURPASSING GREATNESS OF THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST. The word here rendered "root," evidently bears reference to the prophecy in Isa. i. 1—10. "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots," &c. (See also Isa. iv. 2 ; Jer. xxiii. 5 ; Zech. iii. 8, vi. 12.) Not the actual root of the tree is designated, but the scion or sucker, which sprouts from the decaying root. The point of the metaphor is

plain. The house of David is to decay ; but its glories are to be revived in his illustrious heir. At the advent of the Saviour the kingdom of David was indeed like the fallen trunk of a noble tree. A foreign people treads on Judea's soil, and bows a once powerful nation beneath its yoke. Yet behold the vigorous sprout which comes forth out of this decayed root ! In Bethlehem-Ephratah, least of the cities of Judah, He is born, of Mary, the obscure descendant of the royal line. From this lowly origin comes forth He that is to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting. He, the Bright Morning Star, is to eclipse the power of David, and surpass his glory. David ruled but over a small section of the race, and His sway was external ; Jesus rules the world by swaying hearts. In the growing grandeur of Jesus' reign shall that blest period arrive when "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord. For the kingdom is the Lord's ; and He is the Governor among the nations."

Forest Hill.

E. JOHNSON, B.A.

Variations on Themes from Scripture.

(No. XII.)

SUBJECT : *Once Denied, Thrice Denied.*

LIE engenders lie. Once committed, the liar has to go on in his course of lying. It is the penalty of his transgression, or one of the penalties. To the habitual liar, bronzed and hardened in the custom, till custom becomes second nature, the penalty may seem no very terrible price to pay. To him, on the other hand, who, without deliberate intent, and against his innermost will, is overtaken with such a fault, the generative power of a first lie to beget others, the necessity of supporting the first by a second and a third, is a retribution keenly to be felt, while penitently owned to be most just.

Though it was afar off that Peter followed his Master to the

high priest's house, yet he did follow ; and, we may be sure, with little thought, and still less intention, of denying Him even once. But as he sat by the fire and warmed himself, the identification of him by a certain maid as certainly a disciple of Christ was boldly met by the affirmation, or negation, "Woman, I know Him not." The lie was uttered ; the winged word of falsehood was on its way. And there an end, he perhaps hoped. But after a little while another bystander recognised him, and asserted the damaging recognition, "Thou art also of them." Another denial was the consequence : "Man, I am not." An hour passed away, and Peter, in sullen misery and bewilderment, self consciously an abject coward and confirmed liar, had to deny for the third time Him he had denied once and again. "Of a truth," affirmed another of the mixed company, "this fellow also was with Him ; for he is a Galilean." And Peter said, "Man, I know not what thou sayest." And then the cock crew. And then the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. And at that look—so upbraidingly expressive, so pathetically recalling recent protestations of unfaltering allegiance, and the concurrent prediction of lapse and abandonment, what could Peter do, but with shame and confusion of face, and with a heart full to bursting, go out, and weep bitterly.

When he thought thereon, he wept : thought of the Master's look, that recalled to him the vehement assurance of loyalty met by the foretelling of his fall. Thought, too, of the graduation of his denials ; a first involving a second, and the second exacting yet a third. The third was the cost of the first. He had not counted the cost then. He had to pay it now.

It was part of the prophet's burden of woes against the doomed city, that she had "wearied herself with lies." Easily uttered, they may yet multiply at a rate to trouble the teller of them, and weary him if only with the necessity of inventing new ones to back the old. He must ever be devising fresh vouchers for his impaired and imperilled credit. He must continually be endorsing his forged notes, and forging fresh ones that will stand inspection. *Fallacia alia aliam trudit.* And this is weary work.

"En quel gouffre de soins et de perplexité
Nu s jette une action faite sans équité."

And as with actions, so with words. The same speaker of the foregoing couplet utters elsewhere the lament,

“Ma fourbe est découverte. Oh ! que la vérité
Se peut cacher longtemps avec difficulté !”

So we read in Molière. And Corneille has a play (not original) entirely devoted to the illustration of this subject, showing *qu'il faut bonne mémoire après qu'on a menti*; the *Menteur*, κατ' ἐξοχήν, being one who *entasse fourbe sur fourbe*, and is constrained by the law of his nature, at least of habit, which is second nature, to be ever adding to the heap of lies to which he has committed himself. A Spanish proverb—and *Le Menteur* is from the Spanish—declares that “for an honest man half his wits is enough, while the whole are too little for a knave;” the ways, that is, as Archbishop Trench expounds the adage, of truth and uprightness are so simple and plain, that a little wit is abundantly sufficient for those who walk in them; whereas the ways of falsehood and fraud are so perplexed and tangled, that sooner or later all the wit of the cleverest rogue will not preserve him from being entangled therein—a truth often and wonderfully confirmed in the lives of evil men.

Among the aphorisms of Dean Swift we read: “He who tells a lie is not sensible how great a task he undertakes; for he must be forced to invent twenty more to maintain that one.”

It has been called the severe, but appropriate, punishment of historians who desert the paths of truth for those of paradox, to be compelled to defend the falsehood to which they have committed themselves against the ever-accumulating evidences of the truth. Mr. Robertson, of Brighton, feelingly sketches the case of one who, being unprepared and accosted suddenly, says hastily that which is irreconcilable with strict truth; then to substantiate and make it look probable, misrepresents or invents something else; and so has woven round himself a mesh which will entangle his conscience through many a weary day and many a sleepless night.* One burden laid on fault, he goes

* The case of St. Peter was expressly within the preacher's view. “It is shocking, doubtless, to allow ourselves even to admit that this is possible; yet no one knowing human nature from men and not from books, will deny that this might befall even a brave and true man. St. Peter was both; yet this was his history. In a crowd, suddenly, the question

on to show, is that chain of entanglement which seems to drag down to fresh sins. "One step necessitates many others. One fault leads to another, and crime to crime. The soul gravitates downward beneath its burden. It was profound knowledge which prophetically refused to limit Peter's sin to once. "Verily I say unto thee . . . thou shalt deny me thrice.'"

Mr. Froude shows us Queen Elizabeth stooping to "a deliberate lie." At times, he says, writing of her embarrassed policy in 1565, she "seemed to struggle with her ignominy, but it was only to flounder deeper into distraction and dishonour." In October of that year she publicly denied that she had encouraged the rebellion in Scotland. In November, we read, "Never had Elizabeth been in greater danger; and the worst features of the peril were the creations of her own untruths." Again, in May, 1566: "Meanwhile Elizabeth was reaping a harvest of inconveniences for her exaggerated demonstrations of friendliness" to the Queen of Scots. Mary taking her at her word, "Vainly Elizabeth struggled to extricate herself from her dilemma; resentment was still pursuing her for her treachery in the past autumn. . . . She could but shuffle and equivocate in a manner which had become too characteristic."* She was but paying the price of lies—the being constrained to go on lying still. It is certain, affirms a popular essayist, that nobody yet ever did anything wrong in this world without having to tell one or more falsehoods to begin with: the embryo murderer has to tell a lie about the pistol or dagger, the would-be suicide about the poison he purchases; and in fine, "the ways down which the bad ship Wickedness slides to a shoreless ocean must be greased with lies."†

was put directly, 'This man also was with Josus of Nazareth?' Then a prevarication—a lie: and yet another."—"Sermon on the Restoration of the Erring."

* Froude, "History of Reign of Elizabeth," vol. ii., pp. 196, 215, 226, 277, 278.

† Mr. Thackeray incidentally opposes the quasi-apologists for smuggling on the ground that it is a complicated tissue of lying. In his very last, and unfinished, work, he makes a good old rector allow that to run an anker of brandy may seem no monstrous crime; but when men engage in these lawless ventures, who knows how far the evil will go? "I buy ten kegs of brandy from a French fishing-boat, I land it under a lie on the coast, I send it inland ever so far, and all my consignees lie and swindle. I land it, and lie to the revenue officer. Under a lie (that is, a mutual

English reviewers not long since were prompt to recognise in Balzac's "*La Marâtre*," as revived to Parisian popularity, what they rightly accounted wonderful, a moral immaculate and beyond reproach. And what is that moral? "The necessity of a life of lying as a punishment for the one great lie of a mercenary marriage." One great lie is put out to interest, and the interest is compound. One great lie involves a ramification of others, great or small, if there be comparatives of magnitude in such matters; and memory, if not conscience, is for ever on the stretch. The sad expedient of renewed issues is a necessity. As with the involved victim in one of Crabbe's Tales:

"Such is his pain, who, by his debt oppress'd,
Seeks by new bonds a temporary rest."

FRANCIS JACOX, B.A.

Biblical Criticisms.

Human Sinfulness.

IT may help to assist students in framing their own thoughts, or in testing the thoughts of others, by the sure word of Scripture, if I insert here references to most of the passages in the New Testament, wherein the fact of our sinfulness is stated or alluded to. And as mere references are often almost useless, I will add the leading words in each sentence, so that the reader may, without turning over the pages of his Bible, be enabled to recall to his memory the purport of each particular passage. Texts on the remission of sins I will reserve for a future page.*

More than this cometh of evil (*or* the evil one). (Matt. v. 37.)

secrecy), I sell it to the landlord of the 'Bell' at Maidstone, say. . . . My landlord sells it to a customer under a lie. We are all engaged in crime, conspiracy, and falsehood; nay, if the revenue looks too closely after us, we out with our pistols, and to crime and conspiracy add murder. Do you suppose men engaged in lying every day will scruple about a false oath in a witness-box? Crime engenders crime, sir."—"Denis Duval," chap. vii.

* Words which are familiar so often lose their force that I have both here and elsewhere modified our translation, in the hope that I might thus bring home more to some of my readers the purport of Scripture.

If ye then being evil, &c. (Matt. vii. 11 ; Luke xi. 13.)

The evil tree beareth evil fruits, &c. (Matt. vii. 18 ; Luke xi. 13.)

How can ye being evil speak good things? (Matt. xii. 34.)

The "leaven" implies that the meal needs to be leavened. (Matt. xiii. 33.)

The things which proceed from the heart defile the man. (Matt. xv. 18 ; Mark vii. 20.)

There is none good but one, God. (Matt. xix. 17.)

Your inner parts are full, &c. (Luke xi. 38.)

That which has been born of the flesh is flesh. (John iii. 6.)

Men loved darkness, because, &c. (John iii. 19.)

He that is of the earth, &c. ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς γῆς. (John iii. 31.)

Ye *will* not (οὐ θέλετε) come to Me. (v. 40.)

Me it hateth because I testify of it, that . . . (vii. 7.)

If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. (viii. 24 (cf. ver. 21.))

Ye are from beneath, ἐκ τῶν κάτω. (Ver. 23.)

He that committeth sin is the bond-servant of sin. (Ver. 34.)

Ye do the deeds of your father. (Ver. 40.)

Ye are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father ye are ready to do. (Ver. 44.)

Ye say ye see : your sin remaineth. ix. 41 ; (cf. xv. 22.)

The prince of this world cometh, and in Me he hath nothing. (xiv. 30.)

Apart from Me ye have not power to do anything. (xv. 5.)

They have both seen and hated. (xv. 24.)

He will convince the world with respect to sin. (xvi. 9.)

I perceive that thou art, &c. εἰς πολλὴν πικρίας . . . ὄντα . . . hast fallen into and art in). (Acts. viii. 23.)

The sins of the heathen are mentioned in the following order. (Rom. i. 18—32.)

i. Men who hold down the truth in iniquity.

ii. — unwilling to retain God in their knowledge.

iii. Idolatry was punished by the heathen being given up uncontrolled to their own desires.

iv. The consequences of unbridled self-will.

v. At last comes a perverted mind ; a delight even in the sins of others.

Jews and Greeks all shewn to be ὑφ' ἁμαρτίαν, under the power of sin. (Rom. iii. 9.)

The whole world rendered subject to the justice of God. (Ver. 19.)

Through law comes a recognition of sin. (Ver. 20.)

All sinned, and come short of the glory of God. (Ver. 22.)

The pretermission of past sins (acts of sin). (Ver. 25.)
 Christ was delivered up because of our transgressions. (iv. 25.)
 Christ died for ungodly men.* (Ver. 6.)

When we were yet sinners Christ died for us. (Ver. 9.)

When we were enemies we were reconciled.... (Ver. 10.)

Then comes the passage in v. 12—21, I will notice here that we are there taught,

i. That through Adam sin gained entrance into the world,†

ii. And through Sin, Death. (Ver. 12.)

iii. Death came on all, because all ἡμαρτον, sinned.

iv. Sin was in the world before the law. (Ver. 13.)

v. Although sin is not reckoned up,‡ where no law exists.

vi. But yet Death reigned as a king even over those who had not transgressed any law. (Ver. 14.)

vii. Then i. and ii. are repeated : in or by the offence of one man the many men died. (Ver. 15.)

vii. Thus judgment came after one offence§ to condemnation. (Ver. 16.)

viii. Chapters vi. and vii. are repeated in another form : in

* In the same verse our natural condition is represented thus: *δυντῶν ἡμῶν ἀσθενῶν*. "Whilst we were yet infirm, weak, without strength for good." Perhaps *ἀσθενής* is opposed to *ἀγαθός*, good, kind, beneficent, as *ἀσεβής* is opposed to *δίκαιος*.

† "The world of man." Olshausen.

‡ I have no doubt that this is the meaning of *ἐλλογείται* here. Compare *ἐλλόγει*, Philemon 18. The word occurs nowhere else in St. Paul's writings, nor in the New Testament. "*ἐλλογεῖν*. Anrechnen, in Rechnungbringen." *Palm und Rost*. So Dr. Alford, 1852: "I am persuaded that the right sense is 'RECKONED,' set down as transgression—put in formal account by God." We must on the one hand remember that both in Acts xvii. 30, St. Paul declared to the Athenians that "the times of ignorance God overlooked," and in Rom. iii. 25, he wrote that "past acts of sin had been pretermitted;" (thus the sins of the heathen had not been reckoned up as sins, nor indeed could there be where no outward law was transgressed;) and on the other hand we must bear in mind that the figure of a book in which entries were made is used also elsewhere in Scripture, as in Dan. vii. 10, and Rev. xx. 12; and in Col. ii. 14, τὸ καθ' ἡμῶν χειρογραφὸν is best translated "the entry that was against us, written, as it were, by the hand:" and this is associated with τοῖς δόγμασιν. The ordinary word for "imputed" is λογίζεται: and the way in which this is generally used is exemplified in the phrase, ἡ πίστις λογίζεται αὐτῷ εἰς περιτομήν, his faith which he has is imputed to him for circumcision which he has not.

§ In consequence of one offence: Dr. Alford, 1852, says, "The judgment (pronounced by God upon Adam) was by occasion of one man (having sinned)." I prefer the above: the parallel clause ἐκ πολλῶν παραπτωμάτων supplying the substantive to ἐξ ἐνὸς in the first clause. "Judgment followed after one offence to condemnation, but the free gift followed after many offences to justification."

or by one offence Death reigned as a king through the one man [Adam]. (Ver. 17.)

ix. *Thus* through one act of offence judgment came upon all men, to result in condemnation. (Ver. 18.)

x. *Again*, through the disobedience of the one man the many were rendered sinners (or sinful). (Ver. 19.)

We are then taught, that the law came in that the trespass might be multiplied. (Ver. 20.)

And thus Sin was multiplied. (Ver. 20.)

Again, Sin reigned as a king in death. (Ver. 21.)

C. A. SWAINSON, M.A.

(To be continued.)

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

PAUL'S SURVEY OF ATHENS.

"Now, while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry."—Acts xvii. 16.

Our subject is, Paul's *moral survey of Athens*. What did he discover in Athens thus so intensely to distress his heart?

I. GREAT GENIUS PERVERTED.

First: *He saw developments of great genius*. He was alone in a city which was the distinguished seat of philosophy, learning, and the arts; where the most famous poets, statesmen, sages, and heroes of the heathen world were either born or flourished. Although at this time deprived of all political importance, it was still revered throughout the world for what it had achieved in the

cause of freedom, literature, and art. It was called the eye of Greece, the inventor of letters, the light of the civilised world. Here schools still attracted the flower of the Roman youth, and the names of her great men were held in sacred veneration.

Everywhere he saw manifestations of wondrous genius. The city on all hands presented proofs of what man's intellect could achieve. There stood the Parthenon, the Temple of Athene—a pile which even now, after the lapse of centuries, remains the wonder of the world. There stood the Erechtheum, the most venerated of all Athenian sanctuaries; there, too, was the Lyceum, where Aristotle lectured, the Cynosarges, where Antis-

thenes, the Cynic, expounded his harsh and crabbed doctrines; and the Academy, where Plato gave his lessons, was there. It was, in fact, a city of architectural magnificence and monumental splendour. Deities were numerous there, and almost every deity had its temple. The triumphs of mind in its architectural skill, æsthetic creations, and philosophical theories were visible on all hands. What Jerusalem has been in the true religious culture of humanity, Athens has been in the culture of the æsthetical and reasoning powers of mankind.

Secondly: *He saw perversions of great genius.* Though possessing a mind qualified by nature and cultivation to appreciate in a high degree the splendid works of architecture and sculpture which lay about him, in an atmosphere peculiarly transparent, and under a sky beautifully genial, we have no record of any expression of delight which escaped him as he beheld the city. But the contrary: his spirit was "*stirred in him.*" He was thrown into an agony of grief at what he beheld. He had a standard of character unknown to any Athenian sage. He looked upon humanity with a new eye—an eye that peered through all its surroundings into its moral heart. Paul was not dead to the *æsthetic*, but he was intensely alive to the *moral*, and he felt that the æsthetic

glory of Greece was but a gorgeous covering which genius had woven and spread over a vast cemetery of moral corruption. Whilst he could admire the skill that chiselled the marble into such exquisite forms, and piled it into magnificent superstructures, and the ingenuity of intellect, and the adroitness of logic that propounded and discussed philosophical hypotheses, he felt that all this power was *perverted*, since it was all on the side of idolatry, and this "*stirred*" his spirit. Genius and intellect *wasted*—nay, worse than that, employed for immoral and impious ends. As a cultured and devout son of temperance gazes without one thrill of admiration on the æsthetic magnificence of some gin-palace and feels only the most poignant distress at the thought to what the building is devoted—aye, and the greater the display of genius in the architecture, the greater his agony of soul on account of the immoral purposes for which it is employed; so Paul looked at Athens now. There is nothing in mere material civilisation, even in its highest forms, to delight a truly enlightened soul.

II. THE GREAT GOD DISHONOURED. With all the display in the city of æsthetic genius and intellectual power, there was a miserable lack, if not an utter absence, of all the higher elements of soul.

First : *They had no grand moral purpose in life.* They spent their time in nothing else but "either to tell or hear some new thing." Empty theories and idle gossip occupied their attention ; since they knew not the only true God, they had no grand purpose in life. The deeper and diviner parts of their souls were undeveloped.

Secondly : *They had no love for the true God.* Supreme love for the supremely good, and those aspirations of philanthropy which have regard to the moral interest of souls they knew not. Athens, by wisdom, knew not God. "It was easier," says an old writer, "to find a god than a man." Far enough are we from disparaging what is called the light of nature, or from underrating the capabilities of the human mind for searching out God in the works of His hand ; but all history shows that where the Gospel has not gone, man has never reached the true religion, and never felt the higher inspiration of his being. (See Romans i.) The best of the Athenian gods were but men—men that had been, or were supposed to have been—whose attributes were exaggerated by superstitious fancy, and whose very lusts and passions in some cases were of the most revolting kind. Paul knew that the destiny of the soul depended upon its worship ; that if it worshipped any object but the ONE true and living God, it

must inevitably sink lower and lower for ever. There is but one being in the universe that has a claim to the worship of man—the Creator. He claims the supreme homage and service of all souls. His claim is just : no conscience can dispute it. Because the apostle loved supremely this supreme object of worship, he felt intense pain at seeing His righteous claims contemned. "I beheld the way of transgressors, and was grieved."

APOSTOLIC EARNESTNESS.

"And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila ; having shorn his head in Cenchrea : for he had a vow. And he came to Ephesus, and left them there : but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not ; but bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem : but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus. And when he had landed at Cæsarea, and gone up, and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch."—Acts xviii. 18—22.

THESE verses may be taken as an illustration of *apostolic earnestness*. Paul constitutionally was an earnest man. His temperament was pre-eminently sanguine, his heart was in all he did, and with all his might he wrought. He was fervent in business ; every

chapter in his life before, and after, his conversion, shows him to be a man whose purposes were made red hot with the passion of an ever glowing nature. His earnestness in apostolic work comes out in the short paragraph before us. It is here seen :—

I. IN HIS NOBLE DEFIANCE OF DANGER. The Jews had “made insurrection with one accord” against him, and he must have felt, even after Gallio the Roman magistrates had refused to forward, or even entertain their maglinant purposes, their ire was still unsubdued, and all aflame. Yet he quits not the scene of duty. “*Paul tarried there yet a good while.*” Though at every turn he would undoubtedly meet with men with condemnation on their lips, and curses on their tongues, yet he paused not in the prosecution of his work. His glowing sympathies with Christ and the Divine purpose, raised him above the fear of all danger. “He counted not His life dear unto Him.” His apostolic earnestness is here seen :—

II. IN HIS DENIAL OF FRIENDSHIP. There are several things in this narrative which show the trials which his social heart must have felt. First: *His adieu to his brethren at Corinth.* “He took his leave of his brethren. He entered this Paris of the old world to fight the battles alone, and the antagonism was immense, and

he left it with numerous converts, and a prosperous church; the members of that church were “*his brethren,*” he loved them. The two letters which he afterwards wrote to them show the depth of his affection. Yet he leaves them at the call of duty. Secondly: *His separation from his dearest companions at Ephesus.* Priscilla and Aquila, we are told, he left at Ephesus. It must have been not a little painful to a man of Paul’s tender sensibilities, to separate from those with whom he had been so closely and so lovingly connected. They had been his fellow-workers and friends; and inspired with the spirit and purposes that animated him, they had embarked in the same mission, and accompanied him to Ephesus. He came to Ephesus, and left them there. Thirdly: *His departure from Ephesus in opposition to the earnest request of his friends.* “When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not.” “Whosoever loveth father and mother more than me, is not worthy of me.” Paul proved himself worthy of Christ. His apostolic earnestness is here seen :

III. IN HIS CONSECRATION TO DUTY. “I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. First: *He felt that God’s will called him to Jerusalem now.* “I must by all

means keep this feast." He had no doubt about the Divine will upon this point, and hence he was prepared to make any sacrifices to carry it out. Secondly: *He was willing to return to Ephesus, if it were God's will.* "I will return again unto you, if God will." Consecration to the Divine will, which was the very spirit of his life, was the philosophy of his greatness,—his heroism and his marvellous achievements. *Deo volente.* This should always be the devout proviso in all our plans.

SOUL LEANNESS.

"And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul."—Psa. cvi. 15.

THE text refers to the children of Israel in the wilderness, points to their lustings after animal gratifications. "They lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert." Not satisfied with manna, they cried out for animal food. "The mixed multitude which was amongst them fell a-lusting, and the children of Israel wept again, and cried, Who shall give us flesh to eat?" (Num. xi. 15.) Heaven heard their cry, and answered it. "There went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall on the camps two cubits high from the face of the earth." (Num. xi. 31.) But

the gratification in this case of their animal desires brought with it a serious injury to their spiritual natures. "He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their souls." The text leads us to consider *soul leanness* in two aspects.

I. As existing IN CONNECTION with material prosperity. Quails lay thick around them, and deep beneath their feet, "two cubits high from the face of the earth." They had what they wanted physically, had it in abundance. Yet in the midst of this physical luxuriousness they had spiritual destitution, they had leanness of soul. They were weak in faith, in trust, and purpose. They had no power to endure with patience, or to work with perseverance. They were lean spirited. First: *This combination is general.* Everywhere we see great material prosperity associated with spiritual destitution — great physical feasting and spiritual starving, great material wealth and spiritual pauperism. Secondly: *This combination is deplorable.* A sadder sight to a holy eye there cannot be than an individual, family, nation, surrounded with material abundance, and yet lean in soul, matter governing mind—bodies living tombs of souls. The text leads us to consider *soul leanness*—

II. As existing BECAUSE OF material prosperity. It was because the Jews had the ma-

terial good they lusted for, that the leanness came. Why should material prosperity bring spiritual leanness? First: *Not because it is divinely designed to do so.* God does not make a man materially rich in order spiritually to starve him. The design of all his goodness to man is to lead him to repentance. Secondly: *Not because there is any inherent tendency to do so.* A man in possession of an abundance of material good is supplied with abundance of motives, and facilities that tend to spiritual excellence. A condition of material prosperity is, we think, more favourable in itself to acultivation of spiritual goodness than that of material poverty. The man of a well-fed body is especially bound to have a well-fed soul; the man with material wealth is especially bound to secure spiritual treasures. But in the case before us the material prosperity was the cause of spiritual leanness, and why? Because the material good was sought as the chief end. The Jews in the wilderness overlooked all the claims of God, and the high interests of their souls in their intense lusting for animal enjoyment. So it ever is when the world is sought as the grand thing, the soul is necessarily injured. How general this is here in our England in this age! Desire for wealth is the all-absorbing passion, and hence souls are morally lean and dwarfed.

TRUE NOBILITY.

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."—Acts xvii. 11.

WE have here an inspired definition of *true nobility*. This appears to be composed of three elements: an awakened conscience; a quickened intellect; an honest purpose.

I. AN AWAKENED CONSCIENCE. "They received the word with all readiness of mind." There is no earnest inquiry after divine truth unless the conscience be awakened. An awakened conscience supposes, First: *An awakening power.* The Holy Spirit. Secondly: *An awakening agent.* The apostles. Thirdly: *An awakening instrument.* The preached gospel.

II. A QUICKENED INTELLECT. They searched the Scriptures. Searching is an intellectual act. Some make religion to consist entirely in intellectual processes. Others do not think that the intellect has anything to do with religion. Both are wrong. The intellect is the hands of the soul. *They* search for, and present suitable food to the body: *it* does the same for the soul. There are several errors into which an awakened conscience, without the aid of the quickened intellect may lead. Instance the ignoble tendency

of, First: *Superstition*. The policy of the Romish church is *ignorance*. Secondly: *Credulity*. Half the religion of Christendom is a religion of credulity. Thirdly: *Fanaticism*. Insufficient intellectual grasp of the harmony of truth. Undue prominence to a part.

III. THERE IS HERE AN HONEST PURPOSE. "They searched the Scriptures *whether these things were so*." An honest search after truth is the noblest trait in any man's character. To come to the Bible with only this purpose, is evidence of a truly noble nature. How many come for other purposes? First: *To find support for a creed*. Secondly: *To justify their own wrong doing*. Mormons and others. Thirdly: *To condemn another's Christian liberty*. In questions of eating and drinking, or observance of the Sabbath, &c.

H. S. P.

JESUS IN CONFLICT.

"Now is my soul troubled."—John xii. 27.

JESUS IN CONFLICT—for the death conflict has begun. Three questions:—

I. WHY? How thoroughly He was mis-understood, how cruelly wronged: true, but He was less than a martyr if that is all. First: *it was the appointment of God*. We are on the skirts of a deep mystery; we look into an infinite abyss:

we must content ourselves with what Scripture tells us. He is the *lamb of God*. He himself, said, "ought not Christ to have suffered these things," &c. Secondly: *It was to expiate human sin*. The atonement in relation to God: its godward aspect.—Col. i. 20.

II. How? First: *with full confidence in His Father, with perfect submission to His will*. "But for this cause came I unto this hour." In the darkest hour it was still "*my God*." Secondly; *with tenderest love to man*. Evidence of the unselfishness of His love perceptible at the time, *e.g.*, "*daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves*;" and so beneath the cross, when He committed His mother to the beloved disciple, &c. Thirdly: *with bright assurance of the result*. He was to see of the travail of his soul and to be satisfied. He would "draw all men" unto himself.

We are called to conflict. We live as it were in the shadow of the cross; what was seen in Christ is to be seen in us though dimly.

III. WHEREFORE? To bring men to God. He died that we might live, and because He lives we shall live also. Life comes through His death. This life, the highest good of which we are capable, comes to all who believe. Unbelief will exclude us from it; but nothing else can exclude any.

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Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCXXVII.)

A PREVALENT VICE AND A RARE VIRTUE.

"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find? The just man walketh in his integrity; his children are blessed after him."—Prov. xx. 6, 7.
HERE is—

I. A PREVALENT VICE. "Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness." Here is that abominable thing which we designate ostentation, vanity, self-conceit—men parading their imaginary merits. This evil meets you almost everywhere, and it often exhibits itself indirectly, and under the forms of feigned humility. It is seen in the religious world, in the way in which certain men get their subscriptions trumpeted in reports, and their charitable doings emblazoned in journals. It is seen in the political world. In the House of Commons some of the men who are reputed as great orators through the eternal parading of their own doings, are making their names synonyms for vanity and conceit. They proclaim their "own goodness." They are the just men, the philanthropists, the true reformers—what England is, she owes to them. First: *This vice is an obstruction to self-improvement.* The man who prides himself on his own cleverness, will never get knowledge—who exults in his own virtue, will never advance in genuine goodness. Vanity is in one sense the fruit of ignorance; it thrives

most in subterranean places, never reached by the air of heaven, and the light of the sun. But it is also the cause of ignorance. Secondly: *This vice is socially offensive.* Nothing is more offensive in society than vanity. "Wouldest thou not be thought a fool," says old Quarles, "in another's conceit, be not wise in thy own; he that trusts to his own wisdom, proclaims his own folly: he is truly wise, and shall appear so, that hath folly enough to be thought not worldly wise, or wisdom enough to see his own folly." Vanity is an unsuccessful agent; it never gets what it seeks; whilst it works for praise, it never fails to create disgust. Thirdly: *This vice is essentially opposed to Christianity.* What says Paul? For I say through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. What says Christ? "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." What was the doom of the self-parading Pharisee in the temple? How humble was Christ. "He made Himself of no reputation," &c.

II. A RARE VIRTUE. "But a faithful man who can find?" What is faithfulness? The man who in this verse is called faithful, is in the next represented as just, "walking in his integrity." Each of the three terms represents the same thing. To be

faithful is to be practically true. (1.) Practically true to our own convictions. Never acting with-out or against them. (2.) Practically true to our own professions. Never breaking promises, swerving from engagements. Now this is a rare virtue. It always has been rare; it is rare still. The great mass of men are time-serving, are the devotees of expediency. A "faithful man" is a man showing all good fidelity in all things. Now see what is said of this "faithful" and just man, who "walketh in his integrity." "His children are blessed after him." The destiny of children greatly depends upon their parents. The sap in the roots shapes the branch, and gives its character to the fruit. Whilst it is a terrible calamity for children to be born of the ill-bred, the ill-formed, the ill-fed, the prostitute, and the debauchee; it is a blessed thing to be born of parents healthful in body and noble in character. The children are blessed with their health, with their principles, with their spirit, with their habits. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." It is said that Plato seeing a child doing mischief in the street, went forth and corrected his father for it.

(No. CCXXVIII.)

THE PICTURE OF A NOBLE KING.

"A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes."—Prov. xx. 8.

WE have before* met with the subject of these words, under

* HOMILIST, vol. i., fourth series, p. 241.

other forms of expressions, chapters xvi. 14, 15; xix. 12; xx. 2; and the remarks which we have now to offer should be regarded in connection with observations upon those cognate passages. The text gives us the picture of a noble king.

I. HIS OFFICIAL POSITION. "He sitteth on the throne of judgment." The word "judgment" may stand for justice, or rectitude. A true king is on his throne. First: *By right*. What gives a man right to become the king of others? (We mean, of course, the moral right.) Not conquest, not mere birth, but *fitness*. That man in any community who has the most brain, heart, intelligence, conscience, divinity, is the man most entitled to kingship. He is a God-made king. A true king is on his throne. Secondly: *For right*. He is there to see justice done. He does not rule for the interest of a class, but for the good of all. His laws are equitable. Partialities and predilections which govern plebeian souls have no sway over him. He is just, ruling in the fear of God. He is a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well.

"He's a king,
A true, right king, that dare do aught
save wrong,
Fears nothing mortal but to be un-
just:
Who is not blown up with the flatter-
ing puffs
Of spongy sycophants: who stands
unmoved,
Despite the jostling of opinion."
MARSTON.

II. HIS MORAL INFLUENCE. He "scattereth away all evil with his eyes." A man with a true, royal character has a nobler power than official kingship. Legislation, though

backed by the invincibility of arms, is, in respect to true power in an empire, not to be compared with a life embodying divine principles, and animated with the Divine Spirit. Before such a life evils melt away quietly, as mists before the morning sun. He "scattereth away all evils with his eyes." Before the glance of such a king the corrupt would flee from his cabinet and the unchaste from his court. What a king might do and *ought* to do is to purify the morals and exalt the character of his people. In this so-called Christian land there are people who justify wordliness, pleasures, frivolities, and empty amusements in royal life. Of all men in the kingdom the man who is on the throne should be the most moral, the most Christian, the most earnest and indefatigable in his endeavours to expel the false and the filthy, the immoral and the ungodly from the land. Hail the time when the throne of our England shall be occupied by such kings, "when the saints shall take it and possess it for ever." "A king," says Lord Bacon, "must have a special care of five things if he would not have his crown to be but to him 'unhappy felicity.'"

1. That "pretended holiness" be not in the Church, for that is twofold iniquity.
2. That "useless equity" sit not in the chancery, for that is "foolish pity."
3. That "useless iniquity" keep not the exchequer, for that is cruel robbery.
4. That "faithful rashness" be not his general, for that will bring, but too late, repentance.
5. That "faithless prudence" be not his secretary, for that is a snake beneath the green

grass. I will venture to add two more to the philosopher's list: 6. That self-indulgence and arrogance have no place in his heart. 7. That his idea of nobility should be the moral grandeur embodied in the life of Jesus.

(No. CCXXIX.)

MORAL PURITY.

"Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?"
—Prov. xx. 9.

OUR subject is moral purity, and the text represents it in two aspects as transcendently important and lamentably rare.

I. AS TRANSCENDENTLY IMPORTANT. First: *It is essential to peace of conscience.* Through the depravity of our lives from the earliest date of moral consciousness our souls are stained with corruption in every walk. The eye of conscience looking at this gives that anguish of spirit under which all souls do groan. "O wretched man," &c. An unclean heart must ever have an unquiet conscience. Secondly: *It is essential to the growth of soul.* Moral uncleanness is such an atmosphere as prevents germination and growth. It obstructs the quickening sunbeam, the refreshing dew, and the fertilising shower. Moral uncleanness makes the inner heavens as brass. Thirdly: *It is essential to social love.* Our happiness consists in loving and being loved, but no one can really love the morally unclean. The deepest things in human nature recoil with disgust from the morally impure. Fourthly: *It is essential to fellowship with God.* "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

"Without holiness no man shall see God." "If I wash thee, thou shalt not see me." Fifthly: *It is essential to usefulness.* "Holiness is the only means by which holiness can be diffused. It is like salt, its usefulness to others must begin with itself. The man who fails to persuade himself to be holy is sure to be unsuccessful with others. It is the wise man that can impart wisdom to others, it is the good man that can diffuse goodness, and it is only the holy man that can diffuse holiness. Every man can bring forth to others only out of the treasures deposited first in his own heart. He who undertakes to restore mankind to clear-sightedness, must be of clear and accurate vision himself, for he who has a beam in his own eye is not likely to remove either beam or mote from the eye of the world. The physician who is to restore health to others must not himself be fretting with the leprosy." (*Dr. T. W. Jenkin.*) Sixthly: *It is essential to the realization of Christ's mission.* He came to open a fountain for the washing away of sin, he came to put away sins by the sacrifice of Himself, He came to purify unto Himself a peculiar people, &c. His blood taketh away all sin.

II. IT IS LAMENTABLY RARE.
 "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" This is God's challenge. "Gird up thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. (Job xxxviii. 3. "Who?" First: *Negatively.* (1.) Not the ungodly, the worldling, the intemperate, the selfish, the self-righteous, the hypocritical, none of these can say it. (2.) Not the genuine Christian on

earth. So imperfect are the best here, that the more pure they become, the more they feel their pollution. One good man says, "I abhor myself in dust and ashes." Another, "Woe is me, I am a man with unclean lips." Another, "I am the least of all saints, and the chief of sinners." Secondly: *Positively.* The perfected saints in heaven can say it: "We are without spots, or wrinkles, or any such thing."

"Not all the pomp and pageantry of worlds

Reflect such glory on the Eye Supreme,

As the meek virtues of one holy man,
 For ever doth his angel, from the face
 Divine, beatitude and wisdom draw:
 And in his prayer, what privilege
 adored:—

Mounting the heavens and claiming
 audience there:

Yes, there amid a high immortal host
 Of seraphs hymning in eternal choir,
 A life of clay its orisons can send,
 In temples or in solitude out-breathed."

ROBERT MONTGOMERY.

(No. CCXXX.)

THE MARKET.

"Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the Lord. Divers weights are an abomination unto the Lord; and a false balance is not good."—Prov. xx. 10, 23.*

MAN is by his instincts and necessities a trader. Hence commerce is as old and universal as man. In the original, as intimated in the margin of our English Bible, the terms of the passage before us are a "stone and a stone," (or a weight and a weight,— "an ephah and an ephah." The idea probably is that there are one set of weights and measures to sell with, another to

* See HOMILIST, vol. i., fourth series, p. 241.

buy with, one for the inspector, and another for the buyer, one for the unexperienced and confiding, and another for the shrewd and suspecting. The verses lead us to consider the market in two aspects, as the scene of dishonest tricks, and as the scene of divine inspection.

I. AS THE SCENE OF DISHONEST TRICKS. In the days of Solomon, as now, men in the market had different sets of weights and measures for different occasions to gratify their greed. Chicanery was perhaps never more rife in the markets of the world than now, and never played a more subtle, powerful, and disastrous part than in British emporiums. Men are cheated in a thousand ways. False standards, adulterations, fallacious representations, are some of the methods which dishonest men employ to impose upon their customers and clients. There are swindling organizations in our midst legalized, working ruin amongst the least enlightened and least suspicious of our countrymen. Our commercial immorality has gained proportions hideous and portentous. Our national credit is decaying, and Englishmen are being swindled in so many ways that multitudes are constantly seeking homes on other shores. Heaven only knows what will be the end.

II. AS THE SCENE OF DIVINE INSPECTION. "Are an abomination to the Lord." The Omnipresent One is as truly in the market as in any other part of His universe. "Whither shall we flee from His presence?" &c. His eye is everywhere, and what He sees He feels. The wrong is an "abomination" to Him wherever it exists. First: *He prohibits dishonesty in trade.* "Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin shall ye have: I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt." (Lev. xix. 36.) Secondly: *He enjoins social justice.* "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." (Matt. vii. 12.) Thirdly: *He abhors dishonesty.* "Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small: Thou shalt not have in thine house divers measures, a great and a small. But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have; that thy days shall be lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. For all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the Lord thy God." (Deut. xxv. 13—16.) Dishonesty in trade brought ruin upon Israel. (Amos viii. 5.)

ADVANTAGES OF COMMERCE.

I AM wonderfully delighted to see a body of men thriving in their own fortunes, and at the same time promoting the public stock, or, in other words, raising estate for their own families, by bringing into their country whatever is wanting, and carrying out of it whatever is superfluous. Nature seems to have taken a particular care to disseminate her blessings among the different regions of the world, with an eye to their mutual intercourse and traffic among mankind, that the nations of the several parts of the globe might have a kind of dependence upon one another, and be united together by their common interest.—ADDISON.

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

ON THE DANGER OF IMITATION IN THE PULPIT.

To set oneself forth as a model would be not a folly of presumption only, but a folly in point of rhetoric. In elocution, whatever it be, and still more, if it be possible, in eloquence—that is to say, successful eloquence, from the simple talent of conversing or of discussion up to the efforts of the most vehement delivery—I believe in criticisms, in directions: I do not believe in models. No one understands himself; no one sees himself in the pulpit; no one knows how he speaks in public, nor even in private. No mirror can reflect an orator; look at yourself in a glass while you are reciting or extemporising, and you will no longer be yourself; the image will falsify the reality: the care of paying attention to yourself will take away all that is natural in your delivery, and you will see only a bad substitute for yourself. Why? For the simple reason, which has been a matter of experience from the first time that a man spoke to assembled men, that if there is in the world anything thoroughly personal, it is elocution, it is eloquence. Buffon has uttered only half the truth: “The style is the man.” But eloquence, or the spoken style, is perhaps still more the man, the man complete, the man according to the power of being, of conception, of expression; the man, in a word, as God created him, and, finally, as he has been developed

according to his native energies.* If these observations are just, there are no models in the art of speaking. Whoever seeks them, whoever chooses them, goes astray, inasmuch as the best originals make the worst copies. Every imitation of eloquence must lead to a kind of mimicry. The first condition to be fulfilled by the orator is to be himself, and if he is indifferent or bad, his consolation—I ought to say his resource—will be at least to be himself. Originality may, up to a certain point, take the place of talent.

Imitation leads, moreover, to a special danger, of which the imitator himself has not so much as a suspicion. In fact, while he is endeavouring to reproduce the style or the delivery, he pays less attention to the good sides of his models than to the bad, to the feeble or exaggerated sides. Those stand out more, attract attention, and are more easily counterfeited. By this very ease he is betrayed. It often happens that the qualities of an eminent orator are to be explained by his defects, and depend upon them up to a certain point; the excellence and the defects are bound together, are united in him; but they are separated in the imitation; and hence it results that the copyists

* “Are there not almost as many kinds of eloquence as there are orators?”

Nonne fore ut quot oratores, totidem pene reperiantur genera dicendi? (Cicero, de Orat. iii. 9).

often give themselves to the cultivation of vices of delivery which they would not have contracted had they preserved the independence of their elocution. Quintilian has said with as much wit as justice: "Would it not be enough always to speak like Cicero? Yes, assuredly, with this I should be content, if in all things I were able to follow him." (*De Inst. Orat.* x. 2.)

I have heard of a young minister who put in practice as largely as possible the method combated here. Towards the end of his studies he had occasion to hear at different times a preacher of whom he declared himself the systematic imitator. Gestures, bearing, movements of the head, inflexions of the voice—he forced himself to imitate everything, and thus to forsake his oratorical art; he spoke before a mirror of sufficient dimensions; then he laboured assiduously not to be like himself, and the moment came in which he believed he had conceived an infallible means of success in this patient perseverance in tracing and copying. The preacher imitated printed some sermons; the imitator learned them by heart, and, repeating them to satiety, he flattered himself that the identity of the discourse would lead in the end to identity of delivery.....The result proved only too well the justness of the principles I am defending. Imitate no one, and preserve at any cost, even at the cost of mortifications and painful checks at the outset of your course, this advantage which nothing can compensate—the individuality of your eloquence.*

* The celebrated Bishop of Bellay, Camus, although he had written fifteen volumes concerning the ministry

Nature, in the play of our features and the sound of our voice, seems to give this indication in never forming two human physiognomies of which the expression is alike, two human voices in the tone of which there is no difference.

It is not without a return to the first days of my career that I have written some of the words of these last lines. I recollect under what circumstances this rule of speaking with the faculties natural to us, happy or not, rather than with borrowed powers, was revealed to my mind. In 1813, one of my first sermons was delivered before a severe Areopagus of old experts in the art, and, without suspecting my own boldness, I launched forth from the pulpit a true poem in prose, abounding in description and apostrophes, recited with an imperturbable memory and with an impetuosity of accentuation and gesticulation most absurd, but most sincere, most natural. They were surprised, a little stunned, and, after reflection, summed up their

of preaching, "wished to imitate the slow manner of preaching of Francis de Sales, his intimate friend. He spoiled everything, and, by the advice of the saint, he resumed the rapidity which was natural to him. The folly of imitation may descend to the most ridiculous details. Osterwald speaks of "those students who affected almost to speak through their nose, because M. Amyrault, whom they took for their model, had this defect." "Men spoil themselves ordinarily from wishing too closely to copy others; they stifle what they have of genius, in order to take what they have not; whence arise all those deformities which are so frequent in those who put aside their own disposition in order to adopt that of another. This it is which makes so many bad preachers by the false habits they assume."—*Rapin.*

judgment by telling me that it was the preaching of an actor, that they had nothing to hope from it, and that I had better try anything else in the world than to preach. This saying was sufficiently hard, and alarmed me, but one of my friends, scarcely older than myself, presently approached me, and, in the familiar style of students,

whispered in my ear, "Don't distress yourself; go on notwithstanding. You have been yourself; that is the essential point." This saying was for me a kind of revelation; it has sounded without ceasing in my ear, and since then I have never understood a course of eloquence which did not commence by this counsel: Be yourself.

COQUEREL.

Notes on New Books.

BY A BARRISTER.

MR. GLADSTONE'S splendid work, *Juventus Mundi*; the Gods and Men of the Heroic Age, is published by Messrs. Macmillan & Co. It embodies part of the results which the author arrived at in his studies of *Homer and the Homeric Age*. He describes it as "a homely production," and says it was "mainly the production of the two recesses of 1867 and 1868."

The Ballad Literature and Popular Music of the Olden Time, is a history of the ancient songs, ballads, and of the dance tunes of England, with numerous anecdotes and entire ballads, with a short account of the minstrels, by W. Chappell, F.S.A. The whole of the airs harmonized by G. A. Macfarren, in two volumes, are published by Messrs. Chappell & Co.

Mr. Ruskin has given us another book. It is published by Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co., and entitled *The Queen of the Air*; being a study of the Greek Myths of cloud and storm.

Some genuine poems are contained in a volume, called *Western Windows*, by Mr. John James Piatt of New York. They are published in London by Messrs. Low & Co.

Two volumes on *Habit and Intelligence, in their connection with the Laws of Matter and Force*, being a series of scientific essays by Mr. Joseph J. Murphy, are issued by Messrs. Macmillan.

Professor Thorold Rogers gives us a series of sketches, (Macmillan & Co.) on Montagu Walpole, Adam Smith, and Cobbett, entitled *Historical Gleanings*.

Mr. John Hosack publishes (William Blackwood) *Mary Queen of Scots, and her Accusers*. It embraces a narrative of events, from the death of

James V. in 1542, until the close of the conference at Westminster in 1569.

Professor Kampschulte gives us a clear, able, and accurate work, entitled *John Calvin, his Church and State in Geneva*. (Nutt.)

Henry Crabb Robinson's Diary, selected and edited by Dr. Thomas Sadler, is issued in three fascinating volumes by Messrs. Macmillan.

Messrs. Macmillan & Co. also publish an interesting work by Dr. Charles Elam, entitled *A Physician's Problem*. Natural heritage, degenerations in man, moral and criminal epidemics, somnambulism, reverie and abstraction are some of the subjects treated of.

The third volume on *The Anatomy of Vertebrates*, by Professor Owen, a most learned and valuable work, is published by Messrs. Longmans. The book is expected to be the Professor's last, and contains his general conclusions.

Woman's Work and Woman's Culture is the title of a series of Essays, by Frances Power Cobbe, Jessie Boucherett, Rev. G. Butler, Sophia Jex Blake, James Stuart, M.A., Charles Pearson, M.A., Herbert Mozley, Julia Wedgwood, Elizabeth Wolstenholme, and J. Boyd Kinneir, published by Messrs. Macmillan & Co.

The Viscountess Strangford has made a discreet selection in two volumes, (Bentley) of the able writings of Viscount Strangford on political, geographical, and social subjects.

A useful work on the treatment of the Insane, is the *Memoir of Dr. John Conolly*, by Sir James Clark, M.D. (Murray.)

The Baths and Wells of Europe, is the name of a most useful treatise on the therapeutic action of Baths and Waters, with hints on change of air and diet cures. Its author is Dr John Macpherson, and the publishers are Messrs. Macmillan.

B. A. L.

MOST PREFERABLE BOOKS.

"IN literature I am fond of confining myself to the best company, which consists chiefly of my old acquaintance with whom I am desirous of becoming more intimate, and I suspect that nine times out of ten it is more profitable, if not more agreeable, to read an old book over again than to read a new one for the first time. If I hear of a new poem, for instance, I ask myself whether it is superior to Homer, or Shakespeare, or Virgil; and, in the next place, whether I have all these authors completely at my fingers' ends. And when both these questions have been answered in the negative, I infer that it is better (and to me it is certainly pleasanter) to give such time as I have to bestow on the reading of poetry to Homer, Shakespeare, and Co., and so of other things. Is it not better to try and adorn one's mind by the constant study and contemplation of the great models, than merely to know of one's own knowledge that such a book is not worth reading? Some new books it is necessary to read—part for the information they contain, and others in order to acquaint oneself with the state of literature in the age in which one lives: but I would rather read too few than too many."—LORD DUDLEY.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

A PISCAR SIGHT OF PALESTINE AND THE CONFINES THEREOF; with the Old and New Testament acted thereon. By THOMAS FULLER, B.D.
London: William Tegg.

WHO will purchase a book written on Palestine upwards of two hundred years ago? Written, too, by an Englishman, who had never visited that country, and who had nothing like the materials for giving information concerning the Holy Land which we have? Who? Hundreds who know the writer. Everything from the pen of quaint old Tom Fuller is valuable on many accounts. His masculine understanding, his philosophic insight, his inexhaustible humour, his inflexible faithfulness to truth, his profound knowledge of human nature in all its springs of life and phases of character, and his quaint and racy style give to his literary productions an imperishable charm. The dedicatory epistle in this volume is attractively remarkable. The dedicatee is a baby, and the words addressed to him are of the shrewdest and quaintest kind. His address to "The Reader" is worth quoting as indicating both the style of the writer and the character of the work before us. "When Jacob had served Laban full seven years for his daughter Rachel, and now promised himself the possession of what he had long looked and much laboured for, his hopes were frustrated by the substituting of Leah in the room of her sister. (Gen. xxix. 23.) And although it may be pleaded that Leah was well qualified and highly meriting in herself, yet still Leah was not Rachel, and Jacob remained both deceived and injured thereby. Many have long patiently waited that I should now, according to my promise, set forth an ecclesiastical history, who now may justly complain that their expectation is abused, finding their changeling in the place thereof, a book of a far different nature tendered instead thereof. And should I plead with Laban the custom of the country, that it is not fashionable to give the younger before the first-born (Gen. xix. 26); should I allege for myself that this book, containing matter of more ancient date, ought to precede the other, yet this, like Laban's answer, will be taken rather as a sly evasion than solid satisfaction. But reader, let me plead in my just defence, that if you be pleased to peruse my promise, you will find the same conditional and not obliga-

tory, except (besides other requisites there expressed) peace be first settled amongst us; and, indeed, the subject challengeth the same, seeing truth cannot be watched to safety in such relations, till peace shall first contract them. Now herein I make my severest creditor my sole judge, appealing to him whether the promises be performed. True it is we have no wars at this instant, yet we have rumours of wars, and though the former only doth destroy, the latter also doth distract. Are these gloomy days already disclouded? (to use my own expression in my promise): or rather, is it not true in the Scripture phrase, that the clouds return after rain? (Eccles. xii. 2.) Indeed, I am sorry that I can say so much in my own defence, and should account myself happy if all other breaches were made up, and I only to be punished for my breach of promise, which, notwithstanding all the difficulties of the subject and distractions of our days, I hope in God in competent time to effect, might but my endeavours meet with a quiet residence and proportionate encouragement for such undertakings. Meantime, accept of these my labours, which, by God's blessing and the bounty of my friends, are brought into the light, useful, I hope, for the understanding of the Scriptures. What I have herein performed, I had rather the reader should tell me at the end, than I tell him at the beginning of the book. For the manifold faults herein, I doubt not that the ingenious reader finding in Palestine six cities of refuge, by God's own appointment, for the safeguard of such as slew one unawares without *malice prepense* (Joshua xx. 7) will of his own bounty build a seventh in his own bosom for my protection when guilty of involuntary mistakes in so great a work. If thou reapest any profit thereby, give God the glory, to whose providence thou art committed by thine in Christ Jesus.'—THOS. FULLER. What renders this book especially attractive is that it contains all the fac similies of all the quaint maps and illustrations of the original edition, and they are truly extraordinary.

SERMONS PREACHED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD. By H. P. LIDDON, M.A. Rivingtons, London, Oxford, and Cambridge.

THIS volume contains thirteen sermons. It is the third edition of a volume which appeared under the title "Some Words for God," a title which we are glad is relinquished. It contains, however, three additional sermons for which we are thankful. The author is one of the ablest scholars and divines in the Episcopal Church of England, or, indeed, in any other Church of England. His work, entitled the "Divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," we have more than once recommended in these pages. It is incomparably the best work we have on this all-important subject. These University sermons are no ordinary compositions. It is to be regretted that all pulpit discourses should be called Sermons. Things that are a disgrace to the intellect of the age and a curse to Christianity because they have a text of Scripture at their head, and addressed to men in the name of Christ, are called *sermons*, as well as some of the divinest

utterances that ever fell from the lips of man. We wish we had names to designate discourses according to their type and merit. These are admirable discourses, thorough in scholarship, deep in philosophy, fertile in quickening suggestions, reverential in spirit, and eloquent in utterance. The following extract is a fair specimen of the thinking spirit and style of this admirable volume of sermons :—"All the plans which Christian charity really devises and set on foot, are based on the principle of respect for man. Christian charity refuses to deal with human beings like counters and in masses : she leaves it to other agencies to sweep the refuse poverty of society into its workhouses, and its refuse labour into the hold of an emigrant ship ; while note is taken of each unit only so far as is needful in order to secure the accuracy of the official return, and to supply his data to the statistician. Christian charity relieves poverty not as conferring a favour, but as satisfying what is in some sense a right : the right of humanity to live, and to ask in God's name at the hands of property the means of livelihood. Christian charity refuses to acquiesce in the inhuman dogma that men or races are incurably bad or degraded : she treats the lowest as still bearing within the stamp of the Divine Likeness, as still capable, through supernatural grace, of the highest elevation. She bends respectfully to tend the foulest wounds ; she kneels upon the pavement side by side with the Eternal Christ, that she may wash the feet which have been soiled in traversing the wastes of time ; she bows herself to the very earth that she may 'take the sinner out of the dust and lift the beggar from the dunghill,' and then 'set him with the princes, even with the princes of the people' of Christ. Especially, in the little ones who fill her schools she respects and tends the image of God, and that sprinkling of the Holy Blood, which has not yet been forfeited. But whether she instruct the young, or feeds the hungry, or clothes the naked, or provides labour for the unemployed, or offers shelter to the homeless, or an asylum to the deranged, or a refuge where the fallen may find aids to rise, or a bed where the sick may die in peace, tended by the hand of love,—everywhere she stands before humanity, not as a patroness, but as might a loving and faithful servant, who is too loyal, too enamoured of her master's named birthright, to be other than affectionate and respectful in the hour of his poverty and his shame."

CHRISTIAN WORK. By Rev. J. SALISBURY, M.A. London: Simpkin Marshall, and Co., Stationers' Hall Court.

THIS is an address delivered at the 100th Annual Association of the New Connexion of General Baptists, held at Sheffield, on Tuesday, June 22nd, 1869. This is just the kind of discourse that should be addressed by presidents of such associations. Such audiences do not want presented to them the anatomy of sceptical thought, metaphysical speculations, and pedantic criticisms. They are for the most part reading men and these things abound in the literature which comes into their hands. They want something practical, they require to have a true idea of the

great work to be done, the best methods of doing it, and the strongest motives to immediate and earnest effort. Mr. Salisbury has here supplied a model for such addresses. It is the utterance of a man who is impressed with the magnitude of the work, and sees clearly the necessary aptitudes and methods for its accomplishment.

GERMS FROM THE CORAL ISLANDS. By Rev. WILLIAM GILL. London : Yates and Alexander, 7, Symond's Inn, Chancery Lane.

THE author of this volume laboured for 16 years as a missionary in the islands of the South Pacific. The present volume gives a concise and connected missionary history of each island in the Hervey, Maniki, New Hebrides, and the Loyalty Groups. The work is a remarkable illustration of the regenerative power of Christianity. The wonderful things which the Gospel has achieved in those islands it has power to achieve everywhere. Who does not desire that the hundreds of islands in the North and South Pacific Oceans, who are yet in the lowest conditions of idolatry, may soon have this regenerating power working amongst them. Whilst the book has the charm of romance, it is a stimulation to evangelizing effort.

CHRIST AND THE SCRIPTURES. By Rev. ADOLPHUS SAPHIR, B.A. London : Morgan and Chase, 38, Ludgate Hill.

THIS book consists of seven chapters, the contents of which are, The Book and the Person, Jesus and the Scriptures, The Testimony of Apostles, Five Characteristics of the Bible, Israel's Messiah the Living and the Written Word, Scripture and the Holy Ghost, Practical Observations, with Special Reference to the Present Age. The subject of this book is confessedly important, a subject for all times, but especially for this age. The author puts this subject in aspects clear, striking, and practical. He thinks independently and devoutly, and writes with great freshness and fervour. The book is *multum in parvo*.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF THE BIBLE. By Rev. W. S. LEWIS, M.A. London : William Hunt and Co., Holles Street, Cavendish Square.

WE scarcely know of any Christian author so familiar with all the incidents of the Bible, and so adroit in turning them to a spiritual and practical account as the writer of this essay. He sees eternal principles in those events which ordinary readers of the Bible would pass over unnoticed. Thus he brings out the hidden and dignifies the little in Holy Writ. He is neither verbose nor ambiguous in language; he wastes no words. His style is terse, trenchant, and translucent.



A HOMILY

ON

The Vanity of the Positive Philosophy.

“But I will save them by the Lord their God, and I will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen.”—Hosea i. 7.



HIS prophecy of Hosea admits of natural subdivision into two parts, the one (chaps. i.—iii.) symbolical, the other (chaps. iv.—xiv.) prophetic. For although some commentators have regarded the symbolical portion of the prophecy as literal historical narrative; yet such an opinion is at the best but conjectural. A mere perusal of the first three chapters inclines us to regard them as symbolic, a view which has the authority of Hitzig, Rosenmüller, Louth and Hengstenberg.

This symbolic portion of the prophecy then is directed, as is shown in the context, chiefly against the ten tribes, whom Hosea addresses under the names of Israel and Ephraim. They had come under Divine displeasure in consequence of their national and religious degeneracy. Idolatry had gained upon every hand. Their rulers and princes had lapsed into

vice and profligacy ; and their state-policy, which of old had been that of trust,—unphilosophic trust, if you will, in the Lord Jehovah, had become an almost atheistic reliance upon merely human and material succours.

This was the state of things which the prophecy deprecated. Hosea was instructed of God to condemn this their departure from the Almighty, as being a sort of spiritual adultery. One characteristic mark of such a departure from Him, followed as it must inevitably be by a vitiated state policy, and national humiliation, was, as we have already indicated, a reliance only upon material and temporal helps in times of emergency. Hence it is said in chap. x. 13.—“Because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men, therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people, and all thy fortresses shall be spoiled.” And to recur to our text, it is against this very characteristic of a corrupt religion, and a declining national life, that these words of the Lord are directed :—“But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen.”

Here then we learn :—

- I. That all human and material succours are alone and by themselves inadequate.
- II. That Divine succours are alone and by themselves adequate.
- III. That in all cases such divine succours are therefore solely to be trusted.

Observe then :—

- I. That all human and material helps are alone and by themselves inadequate.

“I will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen.” In their better days the people of Israel reposed all their confidence in Jehovah. But now that they had lapsed into idolatry,—a change had

passed over them. Their spiritual vision had by degrees narrowed itself down to merely material views of things. They saw only the seen. They possessed no longer that spiritual insight and second-sight which is given by faith. No: when they trusted, they trusted in "the multitude their mighty men," that is, in their military strength and in political alliances with the then great powers. In chap. vii. 11, it is said—"Ephraim is like a silly dove without heart;* they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria."

Judged from a human point of view only, this their conduct, however, does not appear unreasonable. Assyria and Egypt were great powers; it seemed, therefore, politic to seek alliances with them for mutual protection and defence. They had watched the varying issues of battle, and found that there seemed to be a connexion between victory and the possession of an efficient armament. The army which was well equipped and well disciplined was most likely of success; and hence they glided imperceptibly into the belief that the destinies of nations and empires were determinable entirely by these merely material considerations.

In our own age especially this self-same error very extensively prevails. In fact, it seems to have been reserved to our own time to systematize these views into a philosophy, which, calling itself *positive*, excludes from its domain the least element of the supernatural. Our own age has seen the rapid growth of the physical and natural sciences; and, if possible, a yet more rapid and remarkable application of the principles thus evolved to the purposes of everyday-life. It is found that there is constancy in the operations of nature. Law has been discovered, where it was thought that there was but fortuity. Even where the agency of God was of old

* Without heart, &c.—לֹא יָדָע—*lô yêdh, without heart*; that is, without knowledge, without understanding, without spiritual discernment. Maurer explains:—*ut columba simplex, deceptu facilis, sine corde, intellectu.*—Comm. Hist. Crit., vol. ii., p. 245. Hitzig gives a reference to Jeremiah v. 21.

wont to be recognized, as in plague, famine, and earthquake, there now these modern *savants* have traced out the regular operation of law,—of physical cause and physical sequence. And hence at a bound we are told to look to material and phenomenal life for the remedy as well as the cause of our evils :—to turn to science, where once we turned to God :—to collect, classify, and reason upon the phenomena of history, of society, and of nature, and by these means to enable ourselves to avert famine and pestilence, vice and disease, national and domestic decadences, and, in brief, all the other “ills that flesh is heir to.”

Instead of praying for rain in a time of drought, we are to perfect our study of meteorology, and so have the forces of nature as much as possible under our prevision and control. Instead of praying to God to avert plague and pestilence from our shores, the wise men of this generation tell us to study the laws of health, to create a social science, and prosecute sanitary reform. If we would remain prosperous as a nation, we must, so say the followers of positivism, have recourse to material helps, practise political economy, reform our social administration, and push to their farthest limits the practical application of scientific principles. These are the positivist doctrines, which are to replace all true religion, all faith, all belief in a power above nature, all recognition of God, all prayer, all praise, all hope of a future life, all anticipation of final judgment, and of eternal rewards and punishments, as being but so many rags and relics of fetishism and superstition. The same rebuke which applied to Ephraim of old, applies with intensified force to multitudes in our own day. But all this trust to science and scientific helps against the evils and emergencies of human life, is miserably and woefully mistaken.

Science is very good. There is no incompatibility between true science and true religion. By all means let us study science, and subject as far as practicable the agencies around about us to our control and direction. Let us study and

apply sanitary principles, or, in other words, let us be cleanly, scientifically cleanly ; and let us not neglect a due and proper attention to what are called the laws of nature as they affect health and life ; but, having done this, let us not suppose that we can dispense with the supernatural—with, in short, such agencies as those of prayer and faith. The sower must accommodate himself to laws and facts even in sowing his seed. He may cultivate the soil as scientifically as he pleases, the more so the better. He may, and, in fact, ought to study the chemical constituents of the soil, and rotate his crops. But is this all ? Is there to be no trust in God for his blessing ? When all that science can do has been done, is the agriculturalist at all sure, or ever likely to be sure of the result after which he seeks ? Most certainly not. For as in things spiritual, so in things material and earthly, one may plant, and another may water, but “ God giveth the increase.”

A mere trust to means, or, as they are correctly called, secondary causes, how scientifically soever such means may be disposed, is vain and presumptuous. How frequently have the shrewdest anticipations of man been disappointed ! How frequently has the Almighty shown men that “ the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill ; ” and yet what upon the ordinary principles of probability would seem more likely ?—“ but time and chance [namely, what men call “ chance,” things, that is, out of the regular order, things which are not reducible to any law, and which, therefore, do not admit of prevision] happen to them all.” (Eccles. ix. 11.) Manifestly, therefore, material succours—those helps which arise out of an observation, classification, and adaptation of secondary causes merely, are by themselves utterly unworthy. Deliverance may come to a nation in its times of imminent danger by means of an efficient armament under skilful generals ; but it may come without such means, and so come

without their intervention as to show the vanity of such instrumentalities viewed in and by themselves. It was thus with the house of Judah. God had resolved to "have mercy on them," and "save (or deliver) them;" but as if to show the worthlessness of the means of self-defence ordinarily relied upon by states except as He is pleased to crown them with success, the Almighty had also resolved that when He saved them, it should not be "by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen." But we come now to notice,

II. THAT HELP FROM GOD IS ALONE SUFFICIENT. "But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them *by the Lord their God, and not,*" &c." God is the Disposer of all events. The primary elements and forces of nature are combined and adapted to given ends by the same Divine Power which controls the destinies of men. At any moment this Supreme Power may by a volition of his creative will disappoint the cleverest calculation of the cleverest sociologist. In the history of individuals and of nations, who does not see instance upon instance, in which God has baffled man, defied probabilities, determined much from little, great from small, and thus set at naught all man's wisdom and all his might? And is it not thus, that, as if to illustrate the vanity of the most apposite instrumentalities without the informing agency of the Almighty, "God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty . . . and the base things"—*τὰ ἀγενῆ*, *base*, that is,—only in the sense of being *lowly born*, or, as we say, *of no* (à privat.) *family* (*γένος*),—"and things which are despised, yea, and things which are not, hath God chosen to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence." (1 Cor. i. 27, 28.)

And it is thus that we are taught the folly and vanity of trusting in any but God only. God, it is true, deigns to employ human and material agencies in the execution of His purposes. It is a proper part of our education here below

that we should know how to live even this fleshly life wisely and well. The Christian ought to strive to be as scholarly, as scientific, as provident, and as studious of the laws of nature as the mere positivist, the mere materialist, the mere temporalist, who makes it his religion to live only for this life. The Christian ought not to despise the teachings of science, but ought the rather to subserve them to the best material as well as the best intellectual, moral, and spiritual ends. God Almighty has so intended it. Nay, more; He rarely disappoints expectations which are founded upon a careful study of the order and economy of nature. But there ought to be no idolatry of the law and order of nature as such, no vicious limitation of our observations to material facts alone. Because God works in a regular and orderly manner, and because when means which are adapted in view of such regularity and order, are employed, they are thus rendered for the most part effectual; we are not, therefore, to think only of the mere means and instruments, and forget that Divine omnipresent agency, without which the mere instrumentality would be as the body without life, or as the machine without motive-power.

It is after all, then, God, and God alone, who is worthy of trust. A worthy employment of means must still be maintained; but it must be remembered that the issues are with the Lord. We must have masons to build our houses, and watchmen to guard our cities. If the business of the world is to go on, we must rise up early betimes, and betimes sit up late. But in what spirit must all this be done? In the spirit of humble dependence upon God. For it still remains true, as the Psalmist has it, that, "Except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so He giveth His beloved sleep." (Psa. cxxvii. 1, 2.) If God is against us, all the science in the world will avail us nothing. Let but His

ban alight upon our house, or upon our nation, and we are undone. God can defy our economics and philosophies. Despite all our knowledge, and all our skill in its application to useful material ends, our Creator can wipe us out of the book of the living. He can give our palaces as of old He gave the palaces of Nineveh to ruin, so that "both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels . . . and sing in the windows."

So, also, upon the other hand, when all creature helps have failed, when every probability has proved vain, when every material succour has been dried up, when, in brief, the intrinsic worthlessness of all such sources of deliverance, considered alone and in themselves, has reached, so to say, an exhaustive practical demonstration—then it has pleased God in many instances to arise and make bare His arm, and save His people, as He saved the house of Judah, namely, "by the Lord their God," and "not by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen."

The deliverance of Judah thus referred to in the text, furnishes to us a pertinent example of this particular phase of Divine providence. The Lord had said by the mouth of the prophet Hosea, "I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword," &c. And how was this prophecy fulfilled? Most remarkably. As we read in 2 Kings xix. 35, when every other help had utterly failed, then "the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred four score and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed." Even thus does it continue to the present time. "The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen [the nations] to nought, He maketh the devices of the people of none effect. . . . There is no king saved by the multitude of a host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. A horse is a vain thing for safety; neither shall

he deliver any by his great strength." (Psa. xxxiii. 10, 16, 17.) God can work with means, and He can also work without them. He can employ natural agencies, the agencies ordinarily set in operation to a given end, but He can also work out His purposes and effect His designs when such purposes and designs are in actual antagonism with the means. When every human probability points to one, and but one apparently inevitable result, the Almighty can by His own supreme power bring out a result, or results, other both in kind and in tendency than that which the profoundest science could have anticipated. God, then, alone is the true helper. As the Psalmist has beautifully expressed it: "The shields of the earth [*i.e.*, all real defence all over the world, all substantial sources of deliverance, material as much as spiritual] belong unto God."* (Psa. xlvii. 9.) Man may calculate and scheme for a given result, but in vain, except as God may succeed his efforts. Be it then temporal or spiritual salvation, brethren, that we may desiderate; be it food for the body, or food for the soul, after which we seek; be it deliverance from evil either physical or moral that we crave; where are we to find it? Where are we to find such deliverance? Where are we to find our aids to progress, our aids to material, to mental, to moral, and to spiritual development? Where are our helps to prosperity—to advancement? Where are we to find new increments of strength, of knowledge, of faith, of holiness, necessary to the successful treading under foot of those evil principles, which, whether in the sphere of nature or of grace beset us about at every step? Our answer is: Not in the most elaborate and successful schemes of scientific reform, not in the most careful study of the laws of mind and matter, but only in God the maker and upholder of all things, only in Jehovah the Lord of Hosts—the triune author of salvation, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. "Salvation," yes, salvation in the widest possible application

בִּי לֵאלֹהִים מִגִּי' אֶרֶץ *

of the term to the entire range of human experience of body and mind, actual and potential, let the means employed to that end be what they may, "belongeth," as it ever must belong, by incommunicable prerogative, "unto God."

If, then, we wish to make the best of both worlds,—to live this life on purpose to the life beyond,—if we would fulfil worthily the great purposes of being, we must most distinctly remember that our only reliable help is to be found in the Lord, and in Him alone. We must take up the language of the Psalmist, and say, "Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do valiantly: for He it is that shall tread down our enemies." (Psa. cviii. 12, 13.)

III. THAT IN ALL CASES IT IS OUR DUTY TO TRUST ONLY IN GOD. Here we see the practical bearing of the truth enforced by the prophecy. For by the very deliverance which in the text the Lord had promised by the mouth of Hosea to the rival house of Judah, a sharp rebuke was administered to the tribes of Israel. Concerning Judah it was predicted, that they should be saved by the Lord their God, and not by any of those material helps upon which Israel had relied; but concerning the idolatrous ten tribes, it was by the same prophet foretold that, notwithstanding their military strength, and their alliances offensive and defensive with Egypt and Assyria, they should be utterly abased and carried away captive into the very countries to which, in their forgetfulness of God, they had vainly looked for help.

The lesson of the text is, then, that we are *not* to trust to any use of means for the result or results which we may desire. Although we must as rational beings use means in order to given ends, yet must we conscientiously and religiously avoid placing too strong reliance upon such means. We must not, we repeat, trust to the means and appliances, how admirably adapted soever they may be to the

issues contemplated. For of trust, as such, mere means, considered as elements of the causation of any contemplated effect, are totally undeserving and unworthy. Because, for example, our fishing implements have secured us many a good haul of fish, we are not upon that account to "sacrifice to our net and our drag."

No; we must not trust in any class of secondary causes, because such secondary causes are only efficient as they are so made by the informing agency of Almighty God. We must not think that, because we are pursuing a given line of action in the prosecution of our daily business, we are, therefore, sure of success—of growing rich, of gaining our end. O no! human experience has shown too plainly that no amount of prudence, of care, of perseverance, of plodding, will of necessity accomplish the desired result. Some men cannot get on; others cannot help getting on. So far is man from being master of his own destiny. As the old proverb correctly puts it, "Man proposes, but God disposes."

Some aim constantly and assiduously after riches—some after what they are pleased to call a settlement in life—some after honour, some after power, and some after usefulness. But in the prosecution of each such pursuit, remember that though the proper means are important, they are important only as God may see fit to honour and employ them. A man may by legitimate thrift and industry seek the accumulation of wealth, and yet in spite of probabilities be no richer at the end of life than he was at its beginning. Another may pursue after fame, taking especial care to employ the means usually found conducive to such an issue, and yet fail, and that utterly. A third may crave for power, and in like manner, and for a like reason, may be thwarted in each fresh struggle after his darling ambition. Another may with a sincere heart desire to be useful—useful to society, useful to his country, useful to mankind; but because of a too great trust merely in the means ordinarily employed to such end, may fail even in this laudable pursuit. He may

miss his way—abuse knowledge—abuse power, and end by being as injurious to his kind as he intended to be useful.

Even if we set before us a life of piety, of devotion to duty, of separation to the service of Christ, we may yet fail, nay, may even make shipwreck of all our hopes and intentions by trusting too much to the mere means to be employed—the mere mechanical helps to a life of faith. For example, prayer, praise, the reading of God's Word, attention to the sacraments, and non-sacramental ordinances of the Church, are so many means of grace to be employed by every true follower of Christ. But note well the danger—a danger into which positivism has fallen in another sphere of human activity. If we look too much to these things as *in themselves* certain of securing the result sought, to wit, our growth in grace, we err. And the error is fatal. Here is the germ of formalism, superstition, and idolatry. Our faith must find a deeper and firmer basis than even these hallowed means of grace. Even here there must be no forgetfulness of God, since, when trusted in, these religious instrumentalities rather retard than advance the religious life.

What then? Must we neglect or even undervalue these means of grace? Most certainly not. We must rather make a diligent and wise use of them; *but*, in so doing, we must be careful to recollect that their efficacy depends upon their being honoured of God in our individual instance. He is the great Disposer. He is the renovating, life-giving, energizing power in both the worlds of mind and of matter. In fact, without his informing influence, the most skilful employment of natural agencies is and must be vain.

Our imperative duty and highest privilege is, therefore, that we trust in God, and in God alone. Whatever the goal after which we strive, whether temporal or spiritual in kind, we must look on high for success. We must not trust in merely instrumental appliances,—in merely material aids. No: our trust must repose exclusively in God. Our skill

will avail us nothing, our efforts will prove abortive, our anxiety and toil misspent without His blessing. Life, health, wealth, prosperity, happiness, usefulness, honour, power, deliverance, and salvation are all His to give or to withhold according to His own good pleasure.

Let us then learn to recognize God in all things. Let us own His Divine all-embracing supremacy, and let us also realize individually our own dependence—total and self-helpless dependence upon Him. Let us in all our ways acknowledge Him, and as surely as we so do, so surely will He direct our steps. Then will He be with us “to bless our lying down and our rising up, our going out, and our coming in, yea from this time forth, and even for evermore.” Then will the Lord be our God, and although a Sennacherib with his Assyrian hosts should encamp against us to destroy us, we will not fear. For the Lord Jehovah will deliver us, and say unto us as He said of old concerning Judah,—“I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen.”

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RETRIBUTION.

“He that rolls the stone of reproach upon others, let him expect that it will roll back upon himself.” “Ashes fly back in the face of him who throws them.” Examples:—Jacob deceived his father, and was in turn deceived by his own sons. The Egyptians killed the Hebrew male children, and God smote the first-born of Egypt. Sisera, who thought to destroy Israel with his iron chariots, was himself killed with an iron nail, stuck through his temples. Adoni-bezek (Judges i. 5–7). Gideon slew forty elders of Succoth, and his sons were murdered by Abimelech. Abimelech slew seventy sons of Gideon upon one stone, and his own head was broken by a piece of millstone thrown by a woman. Samson fell by the “lust of the eye,” and before death the Philistines put out his eyes. Agag (1 Sam. xv. 33). Saul slew the Gibeonites, and seven of his sons were hung up before the Lord (2 Sam. xxi. 1–9). David (2 Sam. xii. 10–14). Ahab, after coveting Naboth’s vineyard (1 Kings xxi. 19); fulfilled (2 Kings ix. 24–26). Jeroboam; the same hand that was stretched forth against the altar was withered (1 Kings xiii. 1–6). Joab, having killed Abner, Amasa, and Absalom, was put to death by Solomon. Daniel’s accusers thrown into the lions’ den meant for Daniel. Haman, hung upon the gallows designed for Mordecai. Judas purchased the field of blood, and then went and hanged himself.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

OUR PURPOSE.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *TEHILIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough *HOMILETIC* treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The *HISTORY* of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character, and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) *ANNOTATIONS* of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The *ARGUMENT* of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The *HOMILETICS* of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

SUBJECT: *A Song of Thanksgiving in Review of a Troublous Life.*

(Continued from Page 81.)

“The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness:
According to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.
For I have kept the ways of the Lord,
And have not wickedly departed from my God.
For all His judgments were before me,
And I did not put away His statutes from me.
I was also upright before Him,
And I kept myself from mine iniquity.
Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me
According to my righteousness,
According to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight.
With the merciful Thou wilt show Thyself merciful;
With an upright man Thou wilt show Thyself upright;
With the pure Thou wilt show Thyself pure;
And with the froward Thou wilt show Thyself froward.

For thou wilt save the afflicted people;
But wilt bring down high looks.—(Psa. xviii. 20—27.)

HISTORY:—See page 75.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 20.*—“*The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness: according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.*”—Jehovah will treat me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands will He repay me. “The future verbs have reference to the condition of the Psalmist under his afflictions, and the hopes which even then he was enabled to cherish. At the same time they make this the announcement of a general and perpetual truth, a law by which God’s dispensations are to be controlled for ever. The hands are mentioned as organs or instruments of action. Compare Isa. i. 15; Job ix. 30; xxii. 30.”—*Alexander*. Others, however, put the passage in the present tense, thus, Jehovah rewardeth me after my righteous dealing, according to the cleanness of my hands doth he recompense me.—(“Four Friends.”)

Ver. 21.—“*For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God.* The idea, perhaps, of the last clause is, I have not been guilty of apostacy from the service of my God.

Ver. 22.—“*For all his judgments were before me, and I did not put away His statutes from me.*” I have an eye unto his laws, and I cast not His commandments from me. He kept God’s laws before him as the rule of his official life.

Ver. 23.—“*I was also upright before Him.*” The word “upright,” means uncorrupt; and it is the same word as in Job i. 1 is rendered *perfect*. “*And I kept myself from mine iniquity.*” This expression seems to imply that there was an iniquity and a sin to which he was specially prone, and against this he guarded himself with zealous care.

“*Ver. 24.*—“*Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in His eye-, sight.*”—And so Jehovah rewarded me after my righteous dealing according to the cleanness of my hands in his sight. Barnes regards this as meaning, “as if I were righteous.” His words are: “The Psalmist does not say that it was on account of his righteousness as if he had merited the favour of God, but that the interpositions in his behalf had been such as to show that God regarded him as righteous.” Where is the authority for giving the words this theological colouring? Can it be supposed that David meant, “That though I am not a righteous man, yet God has treated me as such”? Sad it is that men should be

tempted to interpret the Word of God by the light of their theological dogma.

Ver. 25.—“*With the merciful thou wilt show Thyself merciful ; with an upright man thou wilt show Thyself upright ; with the pure Thou wilt show Thyself pure ; and with the froward Thou wilt show Thyself froward.*” The “Four Friends” thus render the words:—

“To the holy Thou showest Thyself holy,
And upright towards the upright man :
To the pure Thou showest Thyself pure,
And to the froward as full of frowardness.”

This is a very strong and bold way of uttering the great truth, that God is to men what they are to Him. The expression, “Thou wilt show thyself froward,” in the corresponding passage, 2 Sam. xxii. 27, is rendered, “Thou wilt show Thyself unsavoury.” And in the margin of that place as well as here the word is *wrestle*.

Ver. 27.—“*For Thou wilt save the afflicted people ; but wilt bring down high looks.*” “For Thou wilt save the afflicted people, and lofty eyes Thou wilt bring down.” Another general description of God’s dealings with mankind, repeated more than once in the New Testament. (See Matt. xxiii. 12 ; Luke xiv. 11 ; xviii. 14.) “His ‘high looks,’ or lofty eyes, is a common Old Testament expression for pride and haughtiness. (See Ps. ci. 5 ; cxxxi. 1 ; compare Prov. xxi. 4 ; xxx. 13 ; Isa. x. 12 ; xxxvii. 23.) ‘The afflicted people’ means the people of God when in affliction, or considered as sufferers. ‘Thou,’ is empathic ; ‘however men may despise and maltreat Thy afflicted people, I know that *Thou* wilt save them.’”—(*Alexander.*)

ARGUMENT.—In this section of this sublime ode, written, perhaps, towards the end of David’s reign in review of his troublous life, he regards God’s deliverances in relation to his own character, and in relation to the general principle of the divine dealing.

HOMILETICS.—In these verses David regards God’s interpositions on his behalf as a *vindication of his own character*, and as an *illustration of God’s manifestation*.

I. AS A VINDICATION OF HIS OWN CHARACTER. We offer two remarks :

First: *He regarded his character as very excellent.* It is remarkable at the outset, that David in these verses ascribes the interpositions of God on his behalf, to the

excellency of his own character, and of that excellency he speaks in terms emphatic and strong. He speaks of "my righteousness," of the "cleanness of my hands;" he says, "I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my Lord." He represents himself as having the laws of God at all times before him; and declares, "I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity." This is confessedly a very high estimation for a man to form of his own character.

In what sense can this language be justified? We say at once, not in an *absolute* sense. Morally, in the sight of God, David was very far from being a perfect man. How could a man who committed adultery, slew Uriah, and shed innocent blood, speak of the "cleanness" of his "hands," and say, "I have not wickedly departed from my God"? Elsewhere, too (Psa. xxxii., li., cxxx.), he confesses with profound contrition and humility his moral imperfection in the sight of God. If the language cannot be justified in an absolute sense, how can it be (1.) In an *average* sense? David's sins, flagrant as some of them were, were evidently the exceptions not the rules of his life. The ruling sympathies of his life were with truth, and virtue, and God. The current of his moral being flowed on in the channel of everlasting right. His sins were only wavelets on the stream which the winds of temptation occasionally dashed over the embankments. God judges our character not by the exception, but by the rule, not by occasional impulses, but by the controlling purpose. It can be justified (2.) In an *official* sense. As a king, he was in the main uncorrupt and perfect. He stands out as a very holy king, when compared with Saul, Ishbosheth, Absalom, or Sheba. "What David," says a modern writer, "here extols, is not the ground on which he, personally, as a sinner, obtained the pardon and favour of God, but the ground on which he, as the public champion of a great cause, enjoyed God's countenance while he was honestly and faithfully

maintaining that cause. There would be no self-praise in the lieutenant of a ship saying to his captain, "I adhered to your instructions in every point, and my success was complete." There would have been no self-righteousness in such a man as Luther, saying—"I constantly maintained the principles of the Bible—God crowned my labours with success." The truth is, the honour in such cases is not claimed by the person acting, it is given to his superior, by whose instructions he has acted. He counts himself merely the instrument of carrying out the plans of another: it is through the excellence of these plans that he has had such success."

Secondly: *He regarded his character as divinely influential.* "Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight." Was he right in supposing that God came to his deliverance on account of what he was in himself, or on account of what he had done to serve Him? Undoubtedly. (1.) Individual character is *known* to God. He knows what is in every man. "He understandeth our thoughts afar off." "He weigheth the spirits." (2.) Individual character is *interesting* to God. Nothing in the universe touches the heart of the Great Father so much as the moral character of His children. The corrupt He loathes, the holy He rejoices in. Character moves the Infinite to create Paradises and to kindle Gehennahs. In these verses David regards God's interpositions on his behalf.

II. AS AN ILLUSTRATION OF GOD'S MANIFESTATION. He rises to a view of the great principle with which God deals with all His moral creatures. "With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful," &c. The general principle here is this,—that as man is, so is God to him. This is true in two respects.

First: *As a personal power.* God treats man according to his character. "He renders to every man according to his works." The history of His Providence shows that He has punishments exactly corresponding to the peculiar char-

acteristics in crime of the sinner. Jacob deceived his father, his son deceived him; he cheated his brother, his uncle cheated him; he behaved unnaturally to his father, his sons behaved unnaturally to him. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." This is true.

Secondly : *As a mental conception.* Man's idea of God is his God, it is the deity he worships. There is a God whose existence is absolute and independent. But no man has a true image of that God in him. Each has figured to himself this God, and great are the differences in the ideal. Polytheism is not confined to heathen lands, where idols are made and worshipped. There is a certain kind of polytheism everywhere. Man worships the God he has imaged to himself : and men have different images, according to the state of their own hearts. The revengeful man has a God of vengeance, the sectarian man has a God of sects, the capricious man has a capricious God, the selfish man has a greedy God, the despotic man has an arbitrary God, and the loving man has a loving God. Ah, it is an eternal truth that "to the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful," &c. That God's revelation of Himself in the soul and in the world depends upon the character of man, and that man's conception of God rises or falls with his moral life, is a decree of eternal justice. The converse of this, that our moral nature rises or falls with our conception of God is equally true : for "man must need assimilate himself to what he worships." This is well expressed by Professor Kingsley : "It makes him at last like the false God whom he is preaching (for every man copies the God in whom he believes), dark and deceiving, proud and cruel."

HARVEST.

THE Hindoos, when gathering in their harvest, before it is removed from the threshing-floor, always put aside a part for their gods. Do they not shame many—would not truth say, most?—living in a Christian country?

A Homiletic Glance at the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians.

The student is requested to keep in mind the following things, which will throw much light upon the Epistle. First: The circumstances of the writer when he wrote. He was a prisoner in Rome. During his residence there, in "his own hired house" (Acts xxviii. 30, 31), from the spring A.D. 61 to 63, he wrote the Epistles to the Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and to the Ephesians. It is generally supposed that this Epistle to the Ephesians was the first he wrote during his imprisonment. Secondly: The circumstances of the persons addressed. They lived, it is thought, in Ephesus, an illustrious city in the district of Ionia, nearly opposite the island of Samos, and about the middle of the western coast of the peninsula commonly called Asia Minor. It had attained in Paul's day such a distinction as in popular estimation to be identified with the whole of the Roman province of Asia. It was the centre of the worship of the great goddess Diana. Paul resided here on two different occasions. The first, A.D. 54, for a very short period (Acts xviii. 19—21); the second, for a period of more than two years. The persons therefore addressed in this letter are those whom he had converted from paganism, and in whom he felt all the interest of a spiritual father. Thirdly: The purpose of the letter. The aim of the Epistle seems to be to set forth the origin and development of the Church of Christ, and to impress those Ephesian Christians, who lived under the shadow of the great temple of Diana, with the unity and beauty of a temple transcendently more glorious. For the minute critical exegesis of this apostolic encyclical, we direct our readers to the commentaries of Alford, Webster and Wilkinson, Jowett, Harless, Stier, Eadie, Hodge, and last, though not least, Ellicott. Our aim will be to draw out, classify, and set in homiletic order, the Divine ideas reached by the critical aid of such distinguished scholars.

SUBJECT: *The Abjured and Enjoined in Christian Life.*

"Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." —Eph. iv. 25—32.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 25.*—"Wherefore putting (Greek, 'having put away') away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another." "A neighbour, ὁ πλησίον, the scripture teaches us, is any one near to us, a fellow man of any creed or nation; and

to all such we are bound to speak the truth. But the context shows that Paul is here speaking to Christians, and the motive by which the duty is enforced, shows that by 'neighbour,' he here means fellow-Christian, as in Rom. xv. 2." (*Hodge.*) "Speak ye truth each one with his neighbour," is quoted, slightly changed from Zachariah viii. 16. For "to" he quotes it "with," to mark our mind connexion with one another, as members one of another. (*Still.*)

Ver. 26.—"Be ye angry and sin not." "The words ὀργίσεσθε καὶ μὴ ἀμαρτάνετε, are borrowed from the Septuagint version of Ps. iv. 5, and have received different interpretations. It may mean either 'rage and sin not,' or 'in raging do not sin.' But our version, we think, is a faithful expression of the original. 'Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.' The word is here παροργισμός, 'paroxysm' or 'excitement.'" (*Hodge.*) Ellicott renders it "let not the sun go down on your angered mood." "Neither give place to the devil." Pertinacious anger gives an opportunity to the devil, particularly in the night. It is a soul-mood, congenial with its nature and aims.

Ver. 28.—"Let him that stole (Greek, let him that stealeth) steal no more." It means, "Let the stealing person steal no more." "But rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good." "As he used his hands to steal, let him use them in doing what is right, i.e., in honest labour. Paul elsewhere lays down the general principle: 'If any would not work, neither should he eat.' (2 Thes. iii. 10.) No one is entitled to be supported by others who is able to support himself. This is one great principle of scriptural economics." (*Hodge.*) "That ye may have to give to him that needeth." The good of others, and not our own gratification, should be the supreme aim in all our labour. No man can live unto himself, and no man should attempt to do so.

Ver. 29.—"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth." "The word 'corrupt,' σαπρός, means literally 'putrid,' and then figuratively, offensive and injurious." (*Hodge.*) It is a word redolent of age without grace, &c. (Col. iv. 6.) "But that which is good (Greek, whatsoever is good) to the use of edifying." Ellicott's rendering is "whatsoever is good for the edification of the need." The conversation should be adapted to the spiritual needs of the hour. "That it may minister grace unto the hearers." That is, that it may benefit the hearers.

Ver. 30.—"And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God." This is language condescending to human modes of thought. The language is frequent. "Vexed His Holy Spirit." (Isa. lxiii. 10; Psa. lxxviii. 40), "fretted me" (Ezek. xvi. 43, implying His tender love to us), and of hardened unbelievers; "resist the Holy Ghost (Acts vii. 5.)" "Whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." In whom you are sealed for the day of redemption. A seal was used as a mark of ownership, for the sake of security, and also as a token of genuineness. The Spirit of God guards and distinguishes the true disciple of Christ.

Ver. 31.—"Let all bitterness." "Bitterness." Πᾶσα πικρία. Bitterness is a physical sensation, and the word is here used to represent that

which is similar in moral life. The command "to lay aside all bitterness," means to put away everything that is spiritually disagreeable and injurious both to ourselves and others. "*And wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking.*" Under the head "bitterness" these take their place. "*Wrath*, θυμός (from θύω), 'to burn,' means the mind itself as the seat of passions and desires; then the mind in the commotion of passion. 'Οργή, *anger*, is the passion itself, i.e., the manifestation of θυμός. As clamour and evil speaking are the outward expression of anger. The context shows that βλασφημία is neither blasphemy as directed against God, nor merely slander as directed against men, but any form of speech springing from anger, and adapted either to wound or to injure others." "*With all malice.*" This is the genius. Malice is the secret root of all.

Ver. 32.—"*And be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*" "For Christ's sake" is not true to the original, Θεὸς ἐν Χριστῷ—God in Christ "hath forgiven," Greek, *forgave*. In the case of Christ's disciples their sins are forgiven once for all, it is a past historic fact.

HOMILETICS.—In the preceding verses, as we have seen, under the head of "*The True Method of Studying Christianity*," the apostle exhorted the Ephesians "to put off the old man and to put on the new man." He here proceeds to particularise, and urge this the great practical work of Christianity. He *abjures* the elements of the old man, and *enjoins* the elements of the new. Our subject is *the abjured* and *the enjoined* in the Christian life.

I. The ABJURED in Christian life. There are certain things here which are, alas, often found in connection with *nominal* Christians, and which are therefore too often regarded as identified with the Christian system, which are abjured in language most earnest and strong. What are they?

First: *Lying speech*. "Putting away lying." A lie is a falsehood intended to deceive, with an immoral design; it is a misrepresentation of that to another about which he has a right to know the truth. What then is fiction and parable? say you. There is no justifiable fiction that does not agree with fact, and serve the cause of reality and morals. Lying is one of the most prevalent sins. The ancient heathens everywhere practised it, and moderns too. All travellers and missionaries bear testimony to this. Heathens are not to be believed on their oaths. Alas, the vice is not confined to heathendom. It prevails throughout the civilised world. Lies fill the social atmosphere. Men in every department of life are deceiving and

being deceived by their fellow-men, and often for selfish and immoral ends. Christianity condemns lies. "Lying lips are an abomination unto the Lord." And "liars at last shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." Christianity is essentially and eternally antagonistic to all insincerities and unrealities. Vanity, cowardice, and greed, are the prolific factors of falsehood. Another thing abjured here is—

Secondly: *Sinful anger*. "Be ye angry and sin not." We say sinful anger, for the text implies that there is an anger that is not sinful. Anger is the mind in emotional antagonism, and in a world of unreality, sin, and crime, there is much to justify the strongest antagonism of the soul. Christ Himself looked upon the conduct of the Jews with anger. (Mark iii. 5.) Indignation sometimes fired His breast, and woes like thunderbolts rolled from His lips. The stronger a being's love for the right, the mightier his indignation for the wrong. The text implies two things concerning *sinful anger*—(1.) *That it is abiding*. Hence the command, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Anger should not be allowed to continue in the mind, because it is painful to the soul; it is a fire that burns. He who cherishes it could not better gratify the vengeance of an enemy, for he is in agony all the while. The great Creator, in whose nature there is "no fury," never made the human soul for anger. "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Do not take it to bed with you; it will break your slumber, and it will breed the devils of revenge. "Anger resteth in the bosom of fools." There is another thing here implied concerning *sinful anger*—(2.) *It is favourable to the devil*. "Neither give place to the devil." An angry soul is just the sphere to which the devil has the freest access, and can best work out his malignant ends. All the assassinations, murders, and wars, he works through angry souls. Don't give place to the devil. Human souls may keep the devil out. He cannot enter without their consent. Another thing abjured here—

Thirdly: *Social dishonesty*. "Let him that stole, steal no more." Stealing in some way or other is a vice as prevalent as lying. Our popular ideas of *larceny* are not deep or broad enough for Christianity. Englishmen regard those as thieves only whom the law has convicted of pilfering, and who are gene-

rally amongst the poor and the needy. But in the eye of Christianity, he is a thief who takes from another his rightful due. The tradesman who deals in short weights and measures, and overcharges for his wares, is a thief : the servant who does not occupy faithfully in his master's service the hours and faculties for which he is paid is a thief. The physician who prolongs his visit to his patients beyond what is necessary, in order to get gain, is a thief. The rulers who tax the people to pay them enormous salaries for offices inefficiently and often injuriously filled, are thieves. To all these Christianity says, "Let him that stole, steal no more," be honest. Another thing abjured here is—

Fourthly : *Corrupt language*. "Let no corrupt communications proceed out of your mouth." It is a *putrescent* language that is here abjured. What is a foul speech in the sense of Christianity ? Not the ungrammatic in structure, or the inelegant in style. The irreligious speech, which treats sacred things with frivolous profanity and sneering ridicule, is foul and corrupt. The selfish speech, which argues and persuades solely for personal gratification, is foul and corrupt. The malicious speech, which endeavours to undermine the influence, damage the interests, and injure the reputation of others, is foul and corrupt. The sensuous speech, that seeks to inflame the animal passions, and pollute the pure loves of mankind, is foul and corrupt. All such language, and, alas, it abounds amongst us, is indeed putrescent. As heaps of decomposing vegetable and animal matter send forth gases into the atmosphere injurious to the physical health of the world, all corrupt communications proceeding from the mouths of men impregnate the mental atmosphere with elements most damaging to the moral health of souls. Another thing abjured here is—

Fifthly : *The Anti-Divine*. "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God." Of course we are not to suppose that the Eternal Spirit literally endures grief ; He is the ever-blessed God. What is meant is, "do not do that which is repugnant to the heart and desires of the Infinite Spirit. And what is thus repugnant to the Spirit ? All that the apostle here abjures, as well as moral evil of all kinds. A good reason is here added by Paul—"whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." This expression implies two things. (1.) There is a perfection

awaiting the genuine disciples of Christ, "the day of redemption"—redemption from all evils, corporeal, intellectual, social, and spiritual. Blessed day! (2.) The Divine Spirit has secured them to this. They are *sealed* for it. How flagrant the ingratitude and impiety of opposing such a spirit! Another thing abjured here is—

Sixthly: *Malevolent conduct.* "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you with all malice." Malice, or malevolence, is the root of all. It is malice that generates the *bitter* things in social life; it is malice that kindles the fires of "wrath and anger"; it is malice that makes the tumultuous "clamours" and the contentious brawls. Let this malice be destroyed, and social love, and purity, and peace, shall prevail.

Such are some of the evils that Christianity abjures, and in abjuring these, it abjures that which is the disgrace, the guilt, and the curse of mankind. With an exulting confidence I say to infidels, that whatever is bad in the world, or the Church, instead of growing out of Christianity, is in direct antagonism to it. All wrong is Antichrist; all right is Christian.

The other part of the subject, namely, *The Enjoined in Christian Life*, must remain for treatment for the next number.

Germ of Thought.

THE BYEWAYS OF THE BIBLE.—No. XXI.

SUBJECT: *The Duty of Self-forgiveness.*

"Now therefore be not grieved nor angry with yourselves."—Gen. xlv. 5.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Fifty-third.

IS it allowable, in any case, to forgive ourselves? Some of those who have a proper sense of man's responsibility to his Maker would be inclined, at first, to say, No. Most of those whose views of man's responsibility are inadequate would a

once reply, Yes. It is only too evident, in fact, that they do forgive themselves where they ought not. But does it follow that their reply can never, in any case, be correct? Perhaps the text now before us will help us to reply, implying, as it clearly does, on the one hand, that we ought to grieve for our sins; and teaching us on the other, just as clearly, that there is a proper limit to our grief. To see the truth of this, let us consider our sins, I. In their aspect towards God, and II. In their effects upon man.

I. Let us consider our sins in their ASPECT TOWARDS GOD, the most serious aspect of all. Viewed on this side, they bear this inscription, "acts of enmity and rebellion." They were designed, and carried through, and completed, in defiance of His will. Had we really loved Him at the time, we could not have done them; had we really honoured Him, we should have done the exact opposite. Nor is this made very much better by the consideration, that we probably did not think of God's will at the time, or did not exactly know what it was; because it was one chief part of our duty to ascertain it, and because we might have done so if we had tried. If our Master sends us a letter of directions, and we return it to him unopened, that is no excuse, it is an aggravation of our fault; it is insult and injury in one breath—the very supremest form of contempt. Just think, therefore, of the fearful dishonour we have all of us done to God's law, the utter scorn with which we have treated it, in addition to the direct and actual hostility which we have shown to Himself. There is cause enough here for being grieved and angry with ourselves.

At the same time, if these sins are repented of, and if we have true faith in the blood of the Redeemer, there is an appointed balm for this wound. Ample compensation has been offered for all our scorn and neglect; and, whatever we may have done in the way of dishonouring God's holy law, Christ, in the way of honouring it, has done many times more. In this respect, therefore, if we are true believers, our evil deeds are undone; they are in God's sight as though they had never been committed; they are out of His sight, as it were—"behind Him," "hid in the depths of the sea." It is not only that sentence

against us on their account has been graciously remitted ; those sins themselves, in a sense, are blotted out from the past ; and there are good deeds in their place. I am not explaining this mystery, I am only stating it as it is stated in God's word. We are not only reprieved, we are "justified ;" not only "delivered" by Christ's death, but "made righteous" by his "obedience ;" not only out of debt, but enriched. We have something, therefore, to say to our consciences when they reproach us with the blasphemous character of our sins. Our sins, we may say, have been made the occasion of almost infinite honour to God's law. Just as with Joseph's brethren and Joseph, so with us and that law ; what we did to it in hate and contempt has ended in establishing it on a throne.

II. THE EFFECTS OF OUR SINS UPON MAN. Here again is a very alarming and lamentable view of the case—at any rate, at first sight. "One sinner," it is written, "destroyeth much good." One sin, such as that of Adam, or that of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, is like one leak in a ship, or one decided breach in an embankment ; it lets in a subsequent flood of evils almost as deep as the ocean and as numerous as its waves. It is most distressing to consider in this way, what our past sins may have done—the other sins, the sorrows, the heart-aches, to which they have given birth, and to which these have given birth in their turn—the long posterity of evils, in a word, that may have resulted from our faults. There are no sorrows, in fact, equal to those which are occasioned by men's sins ; either directly, by the injury or anguish they produce, or indirectly, by leading to other sins which produce injury or anguish in their turn. In the history our text refers to this is exemplified with much force. See how the sin committed against Joseph first of all deprived Jacob of a son ; then how it led to the further sin of a false account of his disappearance ; and so, to twenty-two years or cruel silence as to the real nature of his fate. What years of sin were those to his brethren ! What years of torturing grief and anxiety to his father ! And what a complication of misery and agitation they culminated in at the last ! But this is just what sin does. It is like an infectious disease introduced into a community. The first victim is never the only one ; neither

is the first sufferer always the greatest. On the contrary, it deepens frequently as it spreads ; days of anxiety, nights of fever, months of bereavement, years of suffering and privation, are its ultimate fruits. There is not a greater murderer in existence than the man who, through neglect or obstinacy, should introduce a fever into a city. Is the man very much better who sins against other men's souls ?

Yet we have done this, all of us, in our time ; we have sinned against many a soul, and we have occasioned many a pang and many a sin by our sins. On this account, therefore, it well becomes us to be grieved ; and yet, as before, not to grieve in the way of despair. For if our sins have been repented of and forgiven in the way described above, they are not the things that they were ; not in God's sight, as we have seen—not, I believe also, in their effects upon men. You see, in this history, that Jacob's sons (Judah especially, see chap. xliv. 18—34), had become very different men from what they were when they sold their brother as a slave—generous, scrupulous, self-denying, much humbled for sin, and full of reverent love for their father. You see, also, that by the time this change is fully wrought in them, the consequences of their conduct are changed, too. This is the great burden of Joseph's speech. The conduct of his brethren led at first to nothing but evil to their father, both apparent and real. As years rolled on, and they altered, there was apparent evil and real good ; and when Joseph finally declared himself, both apparent evil and real were no more ; the good was unmixed. Not only so, the good was the greater for the evil it displaced. Jacob found much more than he had ever lost, and never had been such a father as he became from that day. One of the best things in the end that ever happened to him was the evil deed of his sons. So with many another sin, truly repented of, in the end. Nothing in Samson's life did more good to Israel than his fall. So of David's fall, and of Peter's ; the mercy called out in their cases has saved millions from despair. So, in some way or another, with every sin that is truly repented of before God. The fact of that sin is unalterable ; but not so its character, if truly repented of and atoned for ; and, therefore, not so its effects. It is believed that there is not a solitary rock in the world which is the same as it was long

ago. The unnumbered showers that have fallen on it, have each, as they slowly passed through, added something fresh from the air or soil above, and taken away something to the stratum below, until the old material is entirely gone in some cases, and nothing remains but the shape. Our past sins are such rocks. When the tears of repentance pass through them, and carry the virtue with them which they derive from the Cross, those solid rocks themselves become changed. You still see the old appearance, but the old results are no more.

It remains to add just one word as to the bearing of our past sins on ourselves. "How could I ever be guilty of such ingratitude? How could I degrade myself by such sin? Ought I not to be grieved, you say, by such thoughts?" You ought to be humbled by it, I fully allow; but that is not the same thing. To a truly renewed soul the exercise of humility is no pain. You ought, also, of course, to be warned by it; you ought to cherish the remembrance of your greatest offence as an evidence of what you are capable of if left to yourself; but in proportion as you hate and abhor it, and practically rise above it, in that same proportion you ought, if anything, rather to rejoice than to weep. "God be thanked that ye *were* the servants of sin," &c. Why should I grieve because I was in pain yesterday, if I am not in pain now, and if I have the remedy which relieved me in my hand? Why not forgive ourselves if God has forgiven us for Christ's sake? Certainly we shall do so in heaven; why not here, if heavenly-minded; and, if not, we are none of Christ's. As of the dead, in a word, so of our sins, though on different grounds; we are grieved for them both, and we ought to be, but not as men "without hope." (1 Thess. iv. 13.)

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SIN IS LIKE FOSSIL RAIN.

THE great stone-book of nature reveals many strange records of the past. In the red sandstone there are found in some places marks which are clearly the impressions of showers of rain, and these so perfect that it can even be determined in which direction the shower inclined, and from what quarter it proceeded; and this ages ago! So sin leaves its track behind it, and God keeps a faithful record of all our sins.

THE FOREIGN PULPIT.—No. XXIII.

SUBJECT : *Blessedness Through the Word.*

"And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."—Luke xi. 27, 28.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Fifty-fourth.

IN the praise which this woman of the company lifted up her voice to proclaim, we see the fulfilment of the prophecy that Mary (Luke i. 48) had uttered concerning herself. Since she had been chosen in a sense in which no other creature had, she had a right to that prophecy, and its fulfilment should surprise no one.

Even Jesus does not dispute her right to be esteemed thus blessed. But He will not confine it to Mary ; it pertains to all who submit themselves to the divine word. To him who receives this word of God rightly, whoever he may be, the way is open to equal if not higher blessedness than that which Mary found and enjoyed.

But it is not in this sense that the Lord uses the comprehensive word with the sound of which we are so familiar—"blessed." He does not mean that the divine word points *the way* to blessedness, that we come *by means of* this to the future enjoyment of the blessedness it imparts ; but He makes the Divine Word to be the fountain of an immediate blessedness, a blessedness to be at once felt and enjoyed. *Blessedness through the Word of God.*

I. IT IS THE GIFT OF GRACE. The effectiveness of the Divine Word on the human mind is generally acknowledged. It is quick, and like a two-edged sword, and this is why it is able to give a new life, yea, to create a new man ; it is the agent of regeneration. (1 Peter i. 23 ; James i. 18.) But it is not a usual experience that it imparts *immediate* blessedness ; on the contrary, its fire and its salt tend rather to cause immediate pain. Notwithstanding this, it is the testimony of the Old Testament singer even that the words of the Lord are sweet, and rejoice the heart, so that they are his delight day and night. Upon what does this depend or rest ?

First: The Divine Word lays bare the depths of our breasts. *Before* it, before which no creature is hid (Heb. iv. 13), and *by* it the heart is opened to us. (Acts xvi. 14.) We talk of natures being superficial or deep: but every human heart has its depths if they were only discovered. We speak of minds being reserved or susceptible; but before the Divine Word every bolt flies back. It is the Word that discovers to a man his own heart (2 Sam. vii. 27), and at the same time there is disclosed to him the possibility of blessedness; for one can only be really *blessed* in the depths of the heart, in the spirit of the mind. Outward things can only make us *happy*.

Secondly: But does one find in the depths of his heart a reason for joy—to say nothing of blessedness? What else do we find there than poverty, hunger, need? But this very poverty and longing the Word meets and stills. In so far it is food, pure milk, water fresh from the fountain—a treasure which makes rich. It is the bearer of the gift of God—introduces it; conducts it into the needy mind. Hence it is called (Heb. vi. 5) the *good* Word of God.

II. IT IS THE FRUIT OF OBEDIENCE. There must be the *hearing* and the *keeping* of this word—expressions corresponding with the ideas conveyed by the words *body* and *heart*. This the required *obedience*.

First: We should *hear* it. Not listlessly running over its words; not making it simply the subject of intellectual study or of esthetical pleasure; but giving ourselves up to it in such a manner as to allow it to do what it is bid to do (Isa. lv. 11); placing no limits to it, and saying, “Hitherto, but no further.” (Heb. iv. 12.)

Secondly: We should *keep* it. That means, not simply that we should hold fast to it, and not break it, but that we should keep it as a word of *prophecy* that is to have its fulfilment: keep it as our star of hope, the pledge of the rising of the sun.” (2 Pet. i. 19.) Then shall we look forward confidently to the fulfilment of grace, and be blessed in this hope.

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By R. VAUGHAN PRYCE, M.A., LL.B.

SUBJECT: *True Churchmanship.*

"One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren."—Matt. xxiii. 8.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Fifty-fifth.

THOUGH the words, "even Christ," are inserted here without the authority of the chief Greek manuscripts, there can be no doubt they explain the true meaning of "Master." For that is the title by which Jesus of Nazareth was very commonly called, not only by the multitude, but by the Scribes and Pharisees, and by His disciples. It is the title too which He accepts as His own, when He says, "ye call me Master and Lord; and ye do well, for so I am." Then, as to those whom He addresses in the words "all ye are brethren," there seems to be no doubt, from a comparison of this with the other Gospels, that Jesus is in this verse speaking to the disciples in hearing of the crowd.

I. THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST. "One is your Master."

First: *Why* is Christ our moral Master? Why is He to be recognised as spiritual Sovereign? His is no arbitrary pre-eminence, but is in harmony with Reason, Conscience, Fact. So we shall feel if we recall (1), *what He is*. His *nature* is divine, and therefore He is Master. The Godhead is royalty as truly as it is wisdom, power, or love. His nature is the very crown and throne of the universe. His *character* is perfect, and therefore He is Master. The glory of His spotless purity, the fascination of His lowliness and love, the sublimity of His self-sacrifice, invest Him with might and majesty that is destined to universal dominion. His *teaching* is complete, and therefore He is Master. In the rich harvest-field of human thought the sheaves of all must bow to His, for He is "the Truth." The reason of Christ's lordship is evident when we recall (2), *what He has done*. He has *ransomed* us. He has *renewed* us. Truly He says, "Without me ye can do nothing." And therefore is He Master.

Secondly: *How* is Christ our moral Master? How does He reign as spiritual Sovereign? (1.) *He regulates our conduct*. He has directions, in His sermon on the mount, for our "eye," our "hand," our "foot." There He enjoins the right dealings towards our "enemy," our "neighbour," our "brethren." And there too, He gives a law for our "alms," our "prayers," our "trea-

sure," our "anxieties." But His mastery pertains not only to our conduct : (2.) *He enlightens our intellect.* From beginning to end Christianity recognises man as a thinker, and has much to do with the intellect. Christ is Lord of the intellect. (3.) *He controls the affections.* He gives love, wayward and ungovernable though it often seems, a law. He says to it, "Thou shalt." He gives the motive and impulse of all right love. He centres it by the constraint of His mediation, on God.

Thus we have suggested why and how Christ is our Master. Let us look at the remaining truth taught in the text :

II. THE BROTHERHOOD OF CHRISTIANS. "All ye are brethren." First : *Why* are Christians brethren ? Not alone on the ground of mere *humanity*. That tie has been so ignored, so outraged by centuries of stubborn selfishness, that it scarcely holds men together as citizens or neighbours, much less as brothers. Nor merely through acceptance of a *common creed*. Intellectual agreement is no guarantee for mutual affection. Uniformity of dogma often produces bigotry towards those without, never ensures brotherhood to those within. Men may hold a common creed, and yet be no more one than icebergs that float on a common sea. Nor merely through union with a *common society*. We may call that society a church, and men may enter it by some initial sacrament, or by "the right hand of fellowship," and yet in ignorance of each other, or in indifference to each other, or in estrangement from each other, their lives may be a parody and a mockery of brotherhood. Only to those can it be said, "All ye are brethren," of whom it is true, "One is your master." Common relationship to Christ creates, and constant communion with Christ sustains the brotherhood of Christians. Because the many branches are on one Vine they are related to each other ; because the many limbs have to do with one Head they are members "one of another." As Christ's thoughts about His disciples become ours about them, and His love for them becomes our love for them, we are knit to them by the kinship that makes us brethren. So while we can and do "honour all men, we love the brotherhood." This leads us to notice,

Secondly : *How* do Christians show that they are brethren ? Among the brothers of a home there is a *family interest*. Home is a circle having a common centre, around which the work,

aims, affections of all revolve. What stirs the heart of one stirs all ; what saddens one saddens all. The same family names are dear, the same family interests guarded by all. Thus are Christians brothers, for there is One Centre of their love, the same names—most of all “the name that is above every name,” are dear to all, the same sacred interests are guarded by all. Among the brothers of a home there is a *family likeness*. The resemblances do not prevent great variety, but are generally sufficient either in feature or expression to identify the children of a home. And though each differ from the other, and each from the parent, all together they would generally supply the complete features, the full expression of that parent. So spiritual brethren have spiritual resemblances, and all combine to reflect the image of the great Father. Among the brothers of a home there is *family life*. There are, arising from constitution, association, and education, surely, family characters. And far more surely among Christians is there a common character, for this is the whole basis of the relationship. Flowing through all there are many life-streams that pulse and throb in each. The great main-current of love is the same in all of them, for each and every one confesses, “for me to live is Christ.”

Having thus noted the two great truths taught in the Saviour’s words before us, let us observe them in their relation to our Church life. The *principles of Church organism*, arising from the two facts of the lordship of Christ and the brotherhood of Christians, are—

I. THE CHURCH MUST CONSIST OF CHRISTIAN MEN. This implies that membership cannot consist in—

First: *National or other local residence*. The being born within certain geographical latitudes or longitudes does not involve a man in calling Christ “Master.” “Ye must be born again.” The accident of being neighbours or fellow-citizens cannot infuse into men the spirit of brotherhood. But he only is a Christian man who does call Christ “Master,” and who feels a brother to Christ’s disciples. Nor can membership consist in—

Secondly: *Ceremonial observance*, whether elaborate or simple. The passing through any form of Church-membership fails to unite to the true Church. The only “rite,” or “ordination,” or “admission” that might make men Christians would

be one that compelled them to live with Christ as their moral Master, and to act towards His followers as brethren. Nor can membership consist in—

Thirdly : *Any money relationship.* Surely to such as would by means of money gain church privileges, the lofty spirit of the apostle would protest with burning zeal, “thy money perish with thee, because thou thoughtest the gift of God could be purchased with money.”

Evidently, then, union with Christ (such union as we have before described) is the sole and sufficient condition of church membership. Men not loyal to that Master are not to be accounted by His disciples as brethren. Else what do the injunctions mean, “Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers;” “Withdraw yourself from every brother that walketh disorderly;” “Let him be to thee as a heathen man and a publican”? On the other hand, all such as make Christ the Master of their lives are (whether recognised by Churches or not), and ought in every way and by every method, for the sake of helping them, and for the increase of Christ’s glory, to be regarded as Christians. For to all those on whom He looks as He says, “One is your Master, even Christ,” He as clearly and convincingly says, “all ye are brethren.”

II. THE CHURCH MUST PROMOTE THE BROTHERHOOD OF CHRISTIANS. There are three errors at whose root our Saviour’s words here lay an axe; errors that seem greatly to hinder the brotherhood of Christians.

First : *The social error of caste and class feeling.* The undue and harsh separation between children and adults, between the poor and the rich, between the rough and the refined, between the unlettered and the educated, make the words, once an admiring tribute, “See how these Christians love one another,” now too often a stinging satire.

Secondly : *The sectarian error of denominationalism.* The sects that by exclusiveness, or arrogance, or pharisaism are continually crying, “the people of the Lord are we,” miss the meaning, and so lose the joy and strength to be found in the words, “all ye are brethren.”

Thirdly : *The ecclesiastical error of hierarchism.* Here we seem to be nearest to the meaning of Christ when He uttered our

text. For as He stood there, in the presence of Scribes and Pharisees, who courted reverence and loved high sounding titles, wishing "to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi;" and in the presence, too, of His disciples, among whom there was danger that this spirit should spring up, He uttered a truth that both classes, and the representatives of both classes, in all lands and ages, need to learn. Here is a protest on behalf of Christian brotherhood—(a.) To those who might be tempted to *haughtiness*. To all such as claim infallibility, or the exclusive right of teaching, or absolute power of discipline, He says, "be not called masters, all ye are brethren." So fully did the apostle Paul drink in the meaning of these words, that his conduct to the churches showed what his pen declared, "not that we would have dominion over your faith, but would be helpers of your joy." In that spirit Dean Alford wisely says, in his notes on our text, "so none by office or precedence is nearer to God than another, none stands between his brother and God." And here, too, is a protest on behalf of Christian brotherhood—(β.) To those in danger of *servility*. There are those in modern churches, as there were in ancient Israel, and as perhaps Christ saw there were among His first disciples, whose craving and cry seem to be, "we will have a king over us." To those in Israel, and to those of their spirit since, does not the Word of God often say, "ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great in asking you a king?" Kingship for Israel then meant a disregard of the great Invisible King, whose special rule had been their glory. They afterwards had Saul; "for God gave them a king in his anger," and history tells what a curse Saul was to the kingdom. Lest the spiritual Israel should repeat the error of their great type, and cry, "Give us a king," Christ turning to them all, enjoins, "Call no man master." The Gospel is the charter of our manhood. It promotes social freedom, mental independence, spiritual liberty.

"Let those who sit in priestly state
As lordlings over mind,
Who by the dogmas they dictate,
The thoughts of men would bind,
Remember well that on this earth
It must be ever heard,
The Lord hath yet more light and truth,
To break forth from His word.—*The Augustine Hymn Book.*

III. THE CHURCH MUST TESTIFY TO THE SUPREMACY OF THE LIVING, PERSONAL CHRIST. That Christ's connection with the churches now is that of a living, personal Christ, finds an argument and an illustration in His dealings with the seven churches of Asia Minor. To the churches still, in authority, oversight, discipline, this One Master remains, for did He not say, "I am with you always, even to the end of the world." All who assume a *priestism* that would come between us and this Christ, or a *rationalism* that would profess to go further into the regions of truth, and nearer to the Eternal God than Christ did, dare not stand in the temple over whose portals are inscribed, "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." Or if they do, whilst we refuse their authority, it should be ours, with honour for their virtues, to plead with them and to pray for them, remembering it may be still true of them and us, "All ye are brethren." But only brethren. "One is our Master;" Christ is "Head over all things."

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U. R. THOMAS.

Variations on Themes from Scripture.

(No. XIII.)

Reserved Knowledge of Times and Seasons.

THE inquiry of the apostles on Ascension-day, whether the Ascending One would at that time restore again the Kingdom to Israel, was baffled by the admonitory assurance, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power." If not for them, for what subsequent representatives of the apostolical succession? Yet every age has had, and certainly the present age is not wanting in those who profess to be in the secret, to be able to read between the lines, and to know that which passeth knowledge.

When St. Paul cautioned the church at Thessalonica, in respect of the Second Coming, to let no man deceive them by any means, the caution, it has been rightly observed, implies that

there were then attempts to mislead, and that it was of importance for Christians to be on their guard. "The result has shown that there is almost no subject on which caution is more proper, and on which men are more liable to delusion." Nor has the necessity for the caution by any means yet ceased.

The elder Milner remarks, in his *History of the Church*, that sagacious and holy men are never more apt to be deceived than when they attempt to look into futurity. "God hath made the present so much the exclusive object of our duty, that He will scarce suffer even His best and wisest servants to gain reputation for skill and foresight by any conjectures concerning the times and the seasons, which He hath reserved in His own power." The remark is made in reference to Cyprian's persuasion, when Gallus renewed the persecutions carried on by Decius, that the end of the world was fast approaching, and the day of judgment close at hand.

More than a generation ago, an *Edinburgh Reviewer* was not speaking without cause to show, when he said of men who could then—as some can now—see in the *Apocalypse* the current condition of Europe, and who told a British statesman to burn his *Burke*, and adopt the *Book of Revelation* for a political manual, that they were carrying on madness upon "too sublime a scale for our interference. We were brought up in the humble creed of looking at the prophecies chiefly in connexion, not with the future, but the past; where a cautious divinity, looking backwards, might shadow out marks of anticipation and of promise, and lead on our faith by marks of divine foreknowledge, to an apparent accomplishment of the Divine Will." But to use them as this year's almanack—the writer went on to observe—to put the *Millennium* backwards and forwards, according as the facts of the last twelvemonth have falsified the predictions of the last edition—to jeopardize the state rather than tolerate a policy (this was in 1829) which might spoil a favourite criticism on some ambiguous text, or might "intercept the vision that is floating for the week over the valley of Albury,"—this, he contended, was to turn the apocalyptic eagle into the cuckoo of the spring.

Not less these haphazard leapers in the dark, dashing to a conclusion, the wilder and more sensational the better, make the judicious grieve, than they make the merry-minded merry.

Horace Smith had his fling at "Dr. C——, who, one month writes a book to expound the Apocalypse, and next month writes another to refute his own argument." Tom Moore had his fling at

"Whiston, who learnedly took Prince Eugene
For the man who must bring the Millennium about;
And Faber, whose pious productions have been
All belied, ere his book's first edition was out."

The attraction of certain popular interpreters of prophecy has been justly said to lie in their representing the most striking and awful predictions as in the very moment of fulfilment, and our own—that is their—lifetime as the theatre of stupendous events, which they are gifted to discern through the world's maze and tumult. "What is most mysterious in the apocalyptic vision, they interpret to mean the current course of events." A pleader for commonplace people is persuaded that the great majority of hearers who take in these utterances as a sort of gospel, have, if they would only use them, faculties that their teachers want, and for the want of which they are such bold commentators. He believes that they have more intelligent notions of time and distance, that they can better apprehend their own place in the vast scheme of Providence, that it is more possible for them to conceive a pregnant future for the world after they live forgotten in their graves, that they can take in the idea of history with a clearer understanding, that they have more of the humility that reason teaches, greater powers of abstraction, and a freer fancy. "We believe, in fact, their minds have a wider scope, and that they have more the gift of looking before and after, than the men on whose lips they hang, and to whom they yield an implicit assent, simply because these self-assured expositors of prophecy speak with a boldness, cleverness, and perhaps eloquence, which shame their own hesitating apprehension, and feeble expression." This superiority, it is maintained, they have, or might have, if they would listen to the suggestions of their mother wit, which, even as it is, withholds them from more than a flimsy adhesion, and keeps them rather amused than convinced. "After all, they do not really believe that the heretic of the year or the season was distinctly foretold in such a chapter and verse, but it is exciting to hear

Dr. So-and-so prove it 'so clearly,' and for this stimulant they sell their birthright," to wit, the right of private judgment, and free exercise of common-sense.

For Christendom has its Calchases, Protestant Christendom, too,—a sort of

"Calchas si renommé,
Qui des secrets des dieux fut toujours informé.
Le ciel souvent lui parle: instruit par un tel maître
Il sait tout ce qui fut et tout ce qui doit être."

The thoughtful and erudite author of "Small Books on Great Subjects," professes, in a confidential letter, an ever-increasing disinclination to the study of prophecy, further than in its great features, remarking that man is not formed for a knowledge of futurity, and that it is seldom he knows how to make use of it, being too apt to put himself in the place of God, and instead of looking on the affairs of the world as a course of things directed to the final amelioration of the human race, to denounce this or that measure or man is impious, and contravening the designs of Providence—this or that event as a visitation, or vengeance, on evil doers.* The French scholar Boulanger is discussed by M. de Barante as a type of certain *érudits*, whose scholarship is narrowed to the circle of ideas connected with the end of the world and the predictions of apocalyptic vision. Some talent he is allowed to have shown; but futile in the extreme were all his endeavours to form a coherent system of exegesis. "Il est impossible d'être plus faible de preuves et de logique que ne l'est Boulanger, dès qu'il essaye des explications ou propose des hypothèses." But, of course, every such doctor had disciples by the dozen to declare that

"Never yet was conclusion so cogent and sound,
Or so fitted the Church's weak foes to confound."

* "St. John, who, if he received the mysterious revelations of the Apocalypse, must have known and felt the full value of such knowledge, insists less upon it than any other of the apostles; and we are told that when he grew old and infirm, he was accustomed to be carried into the church, where he pronounced only these words: 'Little children, love one another!' I never open a page of the 'British Magazine' without thinking how useful a little closer obedience to St. John's precept would be in our times. Read the paper entitled 'Home Thoughts Abroad,' 1834, and you will see an illustration of what I have said about the ill use men are too apt to make of prophecy in the way of exciting uncharitable feelings." —Letters of C. F. Cornwallis, p. 150.

And that

“As for spiritual proofs, he quite puts beyond doubt,
That the whole in the Apocalypse may be found out,
As clear and well-proved, he will stoutly declare,
As anything else has been *ever* found there.”

The representative man of this school has been pictured as one who huddles together a few texts, arbitrarily selected, and then arbitrarily interprets them—so giving satisfaction to the vulgar mind that yearns for very big and very astounding facts, which are capable of brief and precise statement. 1866 was given as the year which was to bring the world to an end; and the proposition was stated with a precision that seemed to exclude possibility of mistake. In that very year the most popular of apocalyptic interpreters said, “So long as twenty years ago, I fixed on 1866 as the date of the consummation of time.” And he even shrank not from asking, “Where are the scoffers now?” The scoffers were demonstratively and defiantly “still to the fore,” scoffing more maliciously than ever, and more successfully. As the year drew to a close, and the interpretation remained unverified, the interpreter began to qualify his decision, and to decide upon “next year, or probably 1868,” as “the consummation of all things.” A shrewd prophet, he was reminded at the time, never thinks of prophesying anything too soon or too precisely: he always leaves an elastic margin of time, or else takes care to clothe his oracle in conveniently elastic phrase. Some twenty years previously to 1866 or 1868 the like speculations were in vogue. Moore made or found matter for mirth in a sermon,

“on the end of the world being near.

Eighteen Hundred and Forty’s the year that some state
As the time for that crisis—but some Forty-Eight;”

while in a footnote he quotes M. Alphonse Nicole as hesitating between 1846 and 1847. Owen Feltham, writing in the seventeenth century, observes that “Some believe that this event will take place in less than nine and twenty years, because as the flood destroyed the former world, 1,656 years after the first destroying Adam; so the latter world should be consumed by fire 1,656 years after the second saving Adam; that is, Christ. But I dare not fix a certainty where God hath left the world in ignorance. The exact knowledge of all things is in God only.”

In Luther's Table-Talk may be read how, on Maître Philippe's asserting that the Emperor Charles would live to be eighty-four, Dr. Martin replied, "The world itself will not last long enough for that. Ezekiel tells us to the contrary. And, again, if we drive forth the Turk, the prophecy of Daniel will be accomplished, and then, you may rely upon it, the Day of Judgment is at hand." These apocalyptic ventures serve to bring to nought the wisdom of the wise, and to show what false steps may be confidently taken in a darkness that is *not* felt; for, if felt, it would crave warier walking.

Wycliffe arrived at the conclusion that the day of judgment would not be deferred beyond the century in which he lived. Not only many visionaries, but some persons of vigorous intellect, are known to have hazarded in various ages similar predictions. Sir David Lindsay fixed on the close of the twentieth century. Napier contended for an earlier date, betwixt 1688 and 1700. The earlier fathers indulged in rather positive and very premature assertions as to the time when, as well as the manner how. A great deal of noise was made in 1848 about the presumed fulfilment of Robert Fleming's prophecy, in 1701, that the downfall of the Pope should be complete in, or rather "about" the former year. The Pope fled from Rome in that year, hence the outcry of jubilant sensationalists. But the Pope came back.

Writing the year after, Professor Kingsley referred to this quasi-fulfilled prophecy, and confessed to have no more faith in Mr. Fleming, the obsolete author, who had so suddenly revived in the public esteem, than in other interpreters of prophecy. "Their shallow and bigoted views of past history are enough to damp our faith in their discernment of the future. It does seem that people ought to understand what has been, before they predict what will be." Does seem, to a Regius Professor of History; but to the short-sighted seers who profess to be so long-sighted and far-sighted, no such seeming would seem to be seemly. There is such a thing, out of Eden, as being naked and not ashamed.

FRANCIS JACOX, B.A.

Biblical Criticisms.

Human Sinfulness.

(Continued from Page 109.)

Passing on we read,

We died to sin. (Rom. vi. 2.)

Sin shall not lord it over you. (Ver. 14.)

Ye were bond-servants to sin. (Ver. 17.)

When we were in the flesh, the passions of our sins, which (passions) were through the law, wrought in our members so as to bear fruit unto death. (vii. 5.)

Is the law sin? nay! I had not known sin, &c., &c. Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all kind of desire. (Ver. vii.)

Apart from all law, Sin is dead. (Ver. 8.)

When the commandment came, Sin revived, &c. (Ver. 10.)

Sin became death to me, that it might be manifested as sin, &c. (Ver. 13.)

I am fleshly, having been sold under the power of sin. (Ver. 14.)

The sin that dwelleth in me. (Vers. 17, 20.)

In me, THAT IS, IN MY FLESH, dwelleth no good thing. (Ver. 18.)

There is a law in my members.....and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which (law) is in my members. (Ver. 23.)

The law of the spirit of life freed me from the law of sin and death.* (viii. 2.)

God, sending His Son in the resemblance of the flesh of sin, and with reference to sin, condemned the sin in the flesh.† (Vers. 3, 4.)

The minding of the flesh is death. (Ver. 6.)

is enmity against God: for to the law of God it is not subject, NOR CAN IT BE, so that they who are in the flesh cannot please God. (Vers. 7, 8.)

If Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin.‡ (Ver. 10.)

* The Law of sin is here used for the Law imposed by sin; as we speak of the Law of God which = the Law given by God.

† So Olshausen "um der Sünde willen, in Anlass der Sünde."

‡ The *δὲ* here is as difficult to represent in English as in Rom. iv. 25. Dr. Alford thinks that *νεκρὸν* here = is under the power of death because of sin which it serves. But if so, should not we have had *θνητὸν*? My own impression is that vi. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, and 11, supply the clue to

If ye live after the flesh, ye are sure to die. (Ver. 13.)

The bondage to corruption (= death ?) (Ver. 21.)

Everything that is not of faith is sin. (xiv. 23.)

We may notice now the contrast between the Epistle to the Romans and those that follow.

In 1 Cor. we have very few allusions to *sin* as corrupting.

I would refer only to

Every act of sin that a man committeth. (1 Cor. vi. 18.)

To the case of the fornicator. (Chap. v.)

And to xv. 56, The sting of death is sin, &c.

Passing on, I notice, in 2 Cor. iv. 3,

The Gospel is hid in those that are perishing : in whom the god of this world, &c.

The Scripture concluded all under sin, in order that—(Gal. iii. 22.)

The law was added for the sake of the transgressions [it should call forth] τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν. (Ver. 19.)

Ye were in bondage to them that are not gods. (iv. 8.)

When ye were dead in trespasses and in sins. (Eph. ii. 1.)

We ALL lived in the desires of our flesh, doing the wishes of the flesh, and of the impulses which passed through the mind (τῶν διαβολῶν), and were children—by nature—of wrath, as were also all the rest. (Ver. 3.)

Ye were alienated from the polity of Israel, and strangers to the covenants, &c. (Ver. 1, 3.)

As the other Gentile nations walk in the vanity of their mind.....alienated from the life of God, &c. (iv. 18.)

The old man, which is perishing in accordance with the desires of Deceit. (Ver. 22.)

A crooked and perverted generation. (Phil. ii. 15.)

You, when ye were once alienated and enemies in your mind..... (Col. i. 21.)

Foolishly puffed up by the mind of his flesh. (ii. 18.)

The man of sin. (2 Thess. ii. 3.)

Men corrupted in their minds. (1 Tim. vi. 5 ; 2 Tim. iii. 8 ; cf. Titus i. 15.)

We were once.....in bondage to various desires and pleasures. (Tit. iii. 3.)

Deceitfulness of sin. (Heb. iii. 13.)

If we sin willingly. (x. 27.)

Struggling against sin. (xii. 4.)

A man is tempted when he is drawn aside by his own desire. (James i. 14.)

the first half of this verse, as John xi. 25, xiv. 6, 1 Cor. xv. 45, furnish the clue to the remainder. Dr. C. J. Vaughan adopts the same view.

- The tongue set on fire by hell (ὕπὸ τῆς γέεννης). (iii. 6.)
 Friendship for the world is enmity to God. (iv. 4.)
 Does the Scripture say in vain, the spirit which dwelt (dwells?)
 in us has longings towards envy and grudging (?) (iv. 5.)
 The time past may suffice to do the will of the heathen.
 (1 Pet. iv. 4.)
 Escaping the corruption which is in the world through (or in)
 desire. (2 Pet. i. 4.)
 Those who walk after the flesh in the desire of pollution, and
 despise authority. (ii. 10.)
 Promise freedom when they are themselves in bondage to
 corruption. (ii. 19.)
 Walking after their own desires. (iii. 3 ; so Jude 16, 18.)
 Carried away by the deceit of the lawless. (v. 17.)
 If we say that we have no sin.....(1 John i. 8.)
 If we say that we have not sinned.....(Ver. 10.)
 State of darkness. (ii. 8, 9, 11.)
 The desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the desire of
 the world. (Vers. 16, 17.)
 Every one that committeth sin, committeth also an act of
 lawlessness ; for sin is lawlessness. (iii. 4.)
 He that committeth sin is of the devil. (iii. 8.)
 They are of the world (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου). (iv. 5.)
 A sin unto death, a sin not unto death. (v. 16.)
 Every act of injustice is a sin. (Ver. 17.)
 The whole world lieth in the evil one. (Ver. 19.)
 Hating even the garment that has been spotted from the flesh.
 (Jude 23.)
 Her sins followed her up to heaven. (Rev. xviii. 4.)
 To this collection I shall again refer.

C. A. SWAINSON, M.A.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

HARVEST.

"Lift up your eyes, and look on
 the fields ; for they are white
 already to harvest."—John iv. 35.

AGAIN is the harvest come
 round, and again are we re-

minded of the goodness,
 fidelity, omnipotence, and un-
 changeableness of that God
 who, upwards of forty cen-
 turies ago, said, "while the
 earth remaineth the seed time

and harvest, and cold, and heat, and summer, and winter, and day and night shall not cease." Harvest is a prolific subject for human thought; it is a many-sided theme, and from every side man may have most soul-quickenings and soul-ennobling views. At different times we have taken glances at various sides of this great subject; we shall look at it now as illustrating three great principles which are ever at work in the Divine government. *The ripening, the compensatory, and the co-operative.*

I. THE RIPENING PRINCIPLE IN THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT. The fruits of the earth which have now reached maturation were a few months ago in a most nascent state. From the time when the sower committed the seed to the earth up to the hour when the reaper thrust his sickle into the field of golden grain, there was a principle at work that never paused day nor night until culmination was reached. And this principle is not only at work in the vegetable kingdom, but in every other domain. It is at work in the *inorganic* realm. Astronomers tell us that our earth and the system to which it belongs are travelling to a crisis, approaching a ripened condition. It works in the *animal* realm. As the oak moves from century to century from the acorn to a point when its perfection is reached and

decadence begins, all animal life passes from the embryo to an organisation worn out with years. But it is in the human realm that we should ponder well its operations. Here it is seen, First: *In the body.* From infancy to old age our bodies are ripening for the grave. Secondly: *In the character.* The character of all men is ripening for a retribution, either of woe or bliss. Thirdly: *In institutions.* Human institutions, whether good or bad ripen, and reach their culmination. They have their harvest. The tares are reaped and are cast into the fire of revolution. Thus, there is a ripening power at work. *Individuals* are ripening; the body for the grave, the soul for eternity. *Nations* are ripening; their end is approaching. The *world* is ripening; the harvest is the end of the world. The end of all things is at hand.

II. THE COMPENSATORY PRINCIPLE IN THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT. We see this principle rewarding the labourer according to the kind and the amount of his work. First: *According to the kind.* What was sown has been reaped—not only the species, but the quality too. The field in harvest gives back to the agriculturist that which he gave it in spring. Nothing different in kind. This principle acts as rigorously in the *moral* sphere. What

man sows he reaps. He that soweth to the flesh, of the flesh reaps corruptions; he that soweth the spirit, of the spirit reaps everlasting life." "Even as I have seen," says Eliphaz, "they that plough iniquity and sow wickedness, shall reap the same." The selfish, the sensual, the untrue, the profane, are sowing moral hemlock, and they shall reap rankling poison. Secondly: *According to the amount.* The sower who sows sparingly his seed, does not receive, other things being equal, back from nature the same as he who scattered with a more liberal hand. It is so in the moral department. He that soweth sparingly, reaps sparingly, &c. There are degrees in glory, and those degrees are regulated by the degrees of goodness. This retributive principle, gleaming in the harvest field, shines everywhere through human life with more or less brightness. It is true it is dim here as compared with what it will be hereafter. Retributive justice, which is a mere star in our earthly sphere, will grow into a sun which shall flood with overwhelming brightness our eternity. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

III. THE CO-OPERATIVE PRINCIPLE IN THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT. In the harvest-field you have the result of a vast combination of agencies, animate and inani-

mate, human and divine. The harvest demonstrates that man has been a *co-worker* with God. Had man not cultured the soil, and scattered the seeds, the golden crops would not have been here, and had not God given the sun, and dew, and shower, and genial temperature, man's industry and skill would have been vain. Indeed, even the agency of the agriculturists, though *free*, were divine. God gave it, God sustained it, God directed it, so that to Him belongeth the praise. It is verily so in spiritual labour. "Paul plants, Apollos watereth, but God giveth the increase."

TRUE LIFE A PRIESTHOOD.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."—Rom. xii. 1.

THE life of every man should be that of a priest. The priests under the law gave intimations with varied clearness and strength of what every man ought to be. No man, whatever his particular vocation in life,—labourer, artisan, merchant, statesman, author, and however well he discharges the duties of his calling, comes up to the idea of manhood, lives worthy of his nature who is not a priest in all. The priestly spirit should be the dominant spirit of humanity, the priestly character

the fashioning power. The earth should be trod, not as a garden, a playground, or a market, but as a temple, whose sounds are the voices, and whose scenes are the symbols of the eternal. Every man should feel that the place on which he stands is holy ground. Christ as a priest is an example to us—His priesthood is what the priesthood of every one should be. The text indicates that true priesthood is characterized by three things—

I. INDIVIDUALITY. “That ye present your bodies.” Bodies here stand not for the mere corporeity of man, but for his whole nature, body, soul, and spirit. It means himself. In this priesthood, First: *Every man is his own sacrifice*. The sacrifice of anything short of his own self will not do. The wealth of the world would not be a substitute for this. He must lay *himself* on the altar. It is not until he has done this that anything else that he can do has aught of virtue in it. What does this offering of self imply? (1.) Not the loss of *personality*. Man does not lose himself by consecrating his existence to the Eternal. He will never be absorbed in the Infinite; a man once a man for ever. (2.) Not the loss of free agency. In the consecration man does not become the mere tool or machine of Omnipotence. In truth he only secures his highest liberty

by yielding up himself to God. What does it mean, then? It includes two things. (1.) Yielding to His love as the inspiration of our being. (2.) Adopting His will as the rule of our activities. This is the dedication, Secondly: *Every man is his own minister*. He must offer the sacrifice himself. No one can do it for him. Could my being be offered to the Almighty by another, it would be a crime in the offerer and no virtue to me. I must do it—do it freely, devoutly, manfully. The text indicates that the true priesthood of life is characterized by—

II. DIVINITY. It is a vital connection with the Great God. First: *God is the object of it*. Men are sacrificing themselves everywhere; some to pleasure, some to lucre, some to fame, some to influence. There are God's many in England at whose altars men are sacrificing themselves. But the object of true priesthood is God—the All-glorious One. Secondly: *God is the motive of it*. “By the mercies of God.” God's mercies, which are infinite in number and variety, are the inciting and controlling motives in this priestly service. The true priest moves evermore from God to God. Thirdly: *God is the approver of it*. “Acceptable unto God.” This priestly life is that in man which God

approves and nothing else. He approves it (1.) Because it is right in itself. (2.) Because it is blessed to man. He knows that there is no happiness for souls without it. In it alone the human being can have all his powers developed, perfected, and beautified. The priestly life, therefore, is full of God, He is all in all. The text indicates that this priestly life is characterized--

III. BY RATIONALITY. "Your reasonable service."

Its reasonableness will be seen if you consider what it really means. First : *It means cherishing the highest gratitude to our greatest Benefactor.*

Reason tells us that we ought to be thankful for favours generously bestowed upon us. But who has bestowed such favours as God? He is in truth the primal source of all our favours. If gratitude is reasonable at all, is it not highly reasonable that our supreme gratitude should be all His.

Secondly : *It means giving the highest love to the best of beings.* Reason tells that we should only love a being in proportion to his goodness. God is infinitely good, therefore He should be loved with all our hearts, minds, souls. Thirdly : *It means that we should render our entire services to our exclusive proprietor.* God owns us ; all we have and are belong to Him. If this is not reasonable, what is ? In truth

religion is the only reasonable life.

CONCLUSION. Such is true priesthood. All other priest-hoods are shams, mimicries, and impieties. Such, indeed, is true religion ; and true religion is only the true life of man. To be genuinely religious is to live as God intended us to live, and He intends us to live, the life of priests. Christ's priesthood will be of no avail to us, unless we become true priests to God ourselves. His priesthood is at once the model and the means of all true human priesthood.

LIVING BY LABOUR.

"Now, when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering, said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing : nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes ; and their net brake."—Luke v. 4—6.

GRAND and suggestive is the scene sketched in the context. The divinest man and the greatest preacher delivering a discourse from a vessel on the Galilean shore, &c.

The subject which the text presents to us is Christ in relation to *physical labour*, and three remarks are suggested.

I. HE ENJOINS ON HIS DISCIPLES ITS OBLIGATION. "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." One

might have expected that Christ would have exempted his own disciples from the necessity of working for their livelihood. Two reasons might have led to this expectation.

(1.) His power. He could have fed them without their labour. By His word He could have brought the choicest fish in any quantity, and laid them on the beach at the feet of his disciples for their service.

(2.) Their spiritual mission. As His disciples, their paramount and urgent duty was to study, expound, exemplify, inculcate, the great doctrines He propounded to them. Surely such a mission would free from the necessity of labouring for bread. No. He requires them to work for their livelihood. "Launch out the vessel." Even after his resurrection, they had to go "a-fishing." (John xxi. 3—8.) And Paul himself, intrusted with the grandest spiritual mission, had to minister to his own physical necessities by his own hands. Christ does not exempt even his disciples from working for their own temporal wants; on the contrary, He requires that they should do so. There are good reasons for this. First: *Their personal good.* Secular labour is not only conducive to physical health, but to mental and moral development. It stimulates thought, it develops the inventive faculties, it promotes patience, resolution, moral endu-

rance. Secondly: *Their social influence.* Were they exempt from the necessity of physical labour, what influence would they have on society? Would their lives be any example for the toiling millions? No. They would excite the envy rather than command the admiration of their contemporaries. Rightly looked on, therefore, we have reason to thank our Great Master that He has not exempted us from toil for ourselves and families. We must "launch out the ship."

II. HE PERMITS WITH HIS DISCIPLES ITS FAILURE. "And Simon, answering, said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night and have taken nothing." This also at first seems somewhat extraordinary. It might have been expected that He would have guaranteed success to the efforts of His own friends, that their purposes should never be broken, that their endeavours should never prove fruitless. It is not so, however. As now, His disciples toiled all night and caught nothing. So in all ages they have frequently broken down in their secular undertakings. Whilst perhaps the majority of bankrupts are rogues, all are not so. Insolvency sometimes overtakes even the best of men. Now this very liability to secular failure which He permits His disciples to experience is useful in many ways. First: *It serves to*

check reckless speculations. A Christian man with a consciousness of his liability to fail in his endeavours will exercise a caution in all the enterprises he adopts. It is true that some that wear the Christian name swindle, and some, sad to say, wear that name in order to do so. But a genuine Christian in all his plans will ever sedulously guard himself against defrauding others. Secondly: *It serves to stimulate to the best exertion.* What is the best exertion in ordinary undertakings?—The *deliberate, skilful, persevering.* Were men certain that they would never fail, there would be a sad temptation to hap-hazardness and inconstancy in labour. Thirdly: *It serves to encourage practical reliance on God.* Were men certain of success, where would be the motive or the need of the prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread"? Practical dependence upon God is the essence of religion and a possibility of a failure in our endeavours seems essential to this. We have reason then to thank our Great Master for this possibility of failing in our work.

III. HE GRANTS TO HIS DISCIPLES ITS SUCCESS. "Nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had done this, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes, and their net brake." This is a specimen of cases

in which Christ grants to His disciples *extraordinary* success in their labours. Occasionally we find Christian men not only succeed in all they do, but whose success is remarkable. Everything they touch seems to turn to gold. They no sooner throw out the net than it is full. First: These cases are *striking enough to show Christ's power over our temporalities.* Secondly: These cases are *few enough to prevent a superstitious dependence upon His providence.*

CONCLUSION:—Christian brothers, deem it not hard that your Master leaves you to labour for your livelihood. The arrangement is beneficent, nor deem it hard that you are sometimes permitted to fail in your honest endeavours. This liability is also for your good. Should abundant success ever crown your efforts, adore His interposing mercy, but cease not practically to recognise the eternal conditions of success.

REDEMPTION.

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted," &c, &c."—Isa. liii. 4—6.

I. THE NEED. (v. 6.) Sheep, but astray; through following their own inclinations. Sin is a wandering from God on the part of those who belong to Him. The way lost, *i.e.*, he who is on the way lost: the

way of return lost. Inquiry into the cause of this will reveal the very essence of sin; it consists in following our own inclinations, *i.e.*, the exaltation of self. Divine pity is on the selfish and the lost.

II. THE MEANS. *The reality* of the redemption seen in the fact that Christ died. He did not die for His own sin; "I am innocent of the blood of this just man," said his judge. He did not die through His own feebleness; "I have power to lay down my life," &c., said Christ, and this "received of His Father." He did not die by accident; "the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all:" it was the will of the Father, and foretold, and a fact. *The form* of the redemption. First: The humiliation of Christ. "He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." The humiliation of Christ teaches the intensity of sin. Where sin is not felt His humiliation is misunderstood, "yet we did esteem Him

stricken," &c. Secondly: The substitution of Christ. "He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." The substitution of Christ teaches the wealth in our redemption; where Christ is not known in His Divine nature the riches of salvation not fully appreciated.

III. THE EFFECT. (v. 5.) Sin atoned for, iniquity borne away; necessity of a personal relation to Christ by faith. Peace: "the chastisement of our peace was upon Him;" "being justified by faith we have peace." Healing: "there went virtue out of Him and healed them all;" contact with Christ the source of healing, should be frequent, will issue in our being made "perfectly whole." We are free from sin to be the servants of God. The depth of His love the measure of our obligation. As that cannot be fathomed our obligation can never be fully realized.

R. V. PRYCE, M.A., LL.B.

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCXXXI.)

THE HEARING EAR AND THE
SEEING EYE.

"The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them."—Prov. xx. 12.

WHY does Solomon say this?

Has not the Lord made everything? Is He not the creator of "heaven and earth and all things that are therein?" Who but the sensuous and unphilosophic doubts this? Verily, the royal sage here utters a very common-place truism. Accept-

ing it as a fact, we draw two practical conclusions.

I. THAT GOD SHOULD BE STUDIED IN THESE ORGANS. "This famous town of Mansoul," says Bunyan, "had five gates in at which to come, out at which to go: and these were made likewise answerable to the walls—to wit, impregnable, and such as could never be opened nor forced but by the will of those within." The names of the gates were these—Ear-gate, Eye-gate, Mouth-gate, Nose-gate, and Feel-gate." Of these five, the "hearing ear" and the "seeing eye" would be popularly and perhaps accurately considered the chief gateways to the soul. First: *In them Divine wisdom is manifest.* Take (1.) The mechanism of these organs. The human frame is "fearfully and wonderfully made," but no parts in the frame are more wonderful in their execution than these. "The eye, by its admirable combination of coats and humours, and lenses, produces on the retina, or expansion of nerve at the back of the socket or bony cavity in which it is so securely lodged, a distinct picture of the minutest or largest object; so that, on a space that is less than an inch in diameter, a landscape of miles in extent, with all its variety of scenery is depicted with perfect exactness of relative proportion in all its parts."

"The eye takes in at once the landscape of the world,
At a small inlet which a grain might close,
And half creates the wondrous world we see."
YOUNG.

Nor is the *ear* less wonderful. It is a complicated mechanism lying wholly within the body,

showing only the wider outer porch through which the sound enters. It conveys the sounds through various chambers to the innermost extremities of those nerves which bear the messages to the brain. So delicate is this organ, that it catches the softest whispers and conveys them to the soul, and so strong that it can bear the roll of the loudest thunders into the chamber of its mistress. Volumes have been written on the mechanism of these organs. Take (2.) The adaptation of these organs. How exquisitely suited they are to the offices they have to fulfil. "Conveying the impressions of the outer universe to the spiritual dweller within, we can," says an eminent author, "by attending to the laws of vision and sound, produce something that, in structure and in mechanism or physical effect, bears some analogy to them. But this is not *sight*; this is not *hearing*. These imply perception. And to perception there are requisite an auditory and an optic nerve, that convey the sensation of sound and vision to the brain; and a *perceiving mind*—an immaterial, spiritual, thinking substance, essence, element—or what else shall we call it? that thus receives its perceptions of things heard and things seen! Oh, this is the highest and deepest wonder. . . . mechanical structure we can trace out and demonstrate. We can show how by the laws of transmission and refraction, the picture is made on the retina of the eye; and how, by the laws of sound, the yielding, tremulous, undulating air affects the *tympanum* or drum of the ear. But we can get no farther. *How* it is that

the mind receives its perceptions, how it is that it is affected, what is the nature of nervous influence, or of the process by which, through the medium of the nerves and the brain, thought is produced on the mind. Of all this we are profoundly ignorant." The celebrated Galen is said to have been converted from atheism by an attentive observation of the perfect structure of the eye. Secondly: *In them Divine goodness is manifest.* (1.) They give us the outward world. Without these what would the glorious heavens, the lovely landscape, and the melodies of the world be to us? Nothing. (2.) They convey to us happiness from the outward world. The Almighty might have provided the hideous and the revolting for the eye, the disharmonious and the discordant for the ear. But not so, there is beauty, sublimity, and music. Thirdly: *In them the Divine intelligence is symbolized.* "He that planteth the ear shall he not hear: he that formed the eye, shall he not see?"

II. THAT GOD SHOULD BE SERVED IN THESE ORGANS. We should use them for the purpose for which He gave them. These organs are given to man for a higher purpose than that for which they are given to brutes. Brutes have them, and in some cases have them in higher perfection than we have. But in brutes they fulfil their mission when they convey sensation, and nothing more. The service for which God intends us to use them is to *convey into our understandings His ideas*, into our hearts *His spirit*. With these eyes we should read the volumes which He has written, both in nature and in Holy Writ—read

them accurately, devoutly, practically. With these ears we should hear the discourses which He delivers in the voices of the world, and in the ministry of His servants. Alas! men don't use these organs in God's service. The great multitude "seeing, see not, and hearing, hear not, neither do they understand." Two things, at least, we should do with them. First: *Translate the sensations they convey to us into Divine ideas.* All outward forms and sounds are redolent with the thoughts of God. For God's thoughts our souls are made, and crave. Secondly: *Apply the Divine ideas to the formation of our characters.* God's ideas should become at once the *spring and rule* of all our activities.

CONCLUSION.—Remember that these organs are at once the gifts and emblems of God.

(No. CCXXXII.)

INDOLENCE AND INDUSTRY.

"Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty: open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread."—Prov. xx. 13.

WE have so frequently met with the subject of this text, and made reflections upon it, that we need do nothing more than merely state the two points of the text:

I. INDOLENCE. First: *Its nature.* Drowsiness. "Love not sleep." Sleep in itself is a blessing; it is strength to the exhausted; it is medicine to the diseased; it is solace to the sorrowing. But the love of sleep implies a drowsiness of nature, which makes the very blessing a curse. The cry of the lazy man is ever a "Little more sleep!"

Secondly: *Its evil*. "Lest thou come to poverty." The natural tendency of indolence is destitution. Destitution temporal, intellectual, and spiritual, follows laziness.

II. INDUSTRY. First: *Its nature*. "Open thine eyes." The expression means quickness. Opening the eyes at dawn, and watching opportunities for profitable labour. Secondly: *Its reward*. "Thou shalt be satisfied with bread." Most men who have distinguished themselves in any department of labour have been early risers. "You rise late," says Todd, "and of course commence your business at a late hour, and everything goes wrong all day." Franklin says, "that he who rises late may trot all day, and not have overtaken his business at night." Dean Swift avers that he never knew anyman cometo greatness and eminence who lay in bed of a morning." "I would," says Lord Chatham, "have inscribed on the curtains of your bed, and the walls of your chamber, "If you do not rise early, you can make progress in nothing. If you do not set apart your hours of reading; if you suffer yourself or anyone else to break in upon them, your days will slip through your hands unprofitable and frivolous, and unenjoyed by yourself." The man who rises early, not only drinks in the most invigorating influences of the day, but adds to the length of his life. "The difference," says Doddridge, "between rising at five and seven o'clock in the morning, for the space of forty years, supposing a man go to bed at the same hour at night, is nearly equivalent to the addition of ten years to a man's life."

"Rise with the lark, and with the lark to bed.
The breath of night's destructive to the hue
Of ev'ry flower that blows. Go to the field,
And ask the humble daisy why it sleeps
Soon as the sun departs? Why close the eyes
Of blossoms infinite, long ere the moon
Her oriental veil puts off? Think why,
Nor let the sweetest blossom Nature boasts
Be thus exposed to night's unkindly damp.
Well may it droop, and all its freshness lose,
Compelled to taste the rank and poisonous stream
Of midnight theatre and morning ball.
Give to repose the solemn hour she claims,
And from the forehead of the morning steal
The sweet occasion. O, there is a charm
Which morning has, that gives the brow of age
A smack of earth, and makes the lip of youth
Shed perfume exquisite. Expect it not,
Ye who till noon upon a down-bed lie,
Indulging feverous sleep."

HURDIS.

(No. CCXXXIII.)

CHICANERY.

"It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer; but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth." — Prov. xx. 14.

MR. BRIDGES says "that Augustine mentions a somewhat ludicrous, but significant, story. A mountebank published in the full theatre, that in the next entertainment he would show to every man present what was in his heart. An immense concourse attended, and the man redeemed his pledge to the vast assembly by

a single sentence: '*Vili vultis emere, et caro vendere;*' 'You all wish to buy cheap, and to sell dear,' a sentence generally applauded; every one, even the most trifling (as Augustine observes) finding the confirming witness in his own conscience." There is no harm in buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest. In fact this is both wise and right in the vendor. Some regard the word "*buyer*" here in the sense of possessor, and then the idea of the passage is changed, and it is this—that a man attaches greater value to a thing after he has lost it than before. When he has it in his possession he does not think much of it, but when it is gone it appears to him of great value. This is a law of human nature. Our Saviour recognises it, and uses it to illustrate the value that the Great Father of Spirits sets upon a lost soul. The lost piece of silver, the lost sheep, the lost son. But it is more like Solomon to regard the text as meaning what it says, the "*buyer.*" We offer two remarks upon the passage.

I. That it reveals A COMMON commercial practice. What is here stated concerning the "*buyer*" in Judea, hundreds of years ago, has always and everywhere been true in human merchandize. The "*buyer*" depreciates the commodity in the process of purchase. He says, "It is naught, it is naught." He finds fault with the material, the texture, or the workmanship of the article.

He does this in order to get it at a price below its worth. And when he succeeds, and it comes legally into his possession, the value of the article is not only properly estimated, but greatly exaggerated. "He boasteth." (1.) Because his *vanity* has been gratified. He feels that he has done a clever thing. By the skill of his depreciating argument he has conquered the vendor and brought him down to his own mark. "He boasteth," (2.) Because his *greed* has been gratified. He has procured property for a consideration beneath its value, he is thereby enriched.

II. That it reveals AN IMMORAL commercial practice. First: *There is falsehood.* If the article is "*naught*," why does the buyer want it at all, and why, when he gets it, does he esteem it of high value? It is a lie; and "lying lips are an abomination to the Lord." The commercial atmosphere of England is so infected with lies, that without a speedy moral fumigation, our mercantile credit will be ruined. Secondly: *There is dishonesty.* To get from another property for a consideration beneath its worth, is a thief. It is a violation of the Divine rule, "whatsoever ye would, thatmen would do to you do ye unto them."

CONCLUSION. O, ye traders who thus transact your business, there is no room for boasting, your secular profits represent terrible moral losses. Though ye are prosperous traders, ye are gazetted in the universe as moral bankrupts.

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

ON THE CONTINUED LABOUR OF PREACHING.

ONE condition that is to be imposed in order well to fulfil the task of preaching, according to the faculties we have received, is to persuade ourselves that it is never finished, that it ought never to be interrupted, that the labour of it ought to be continued throughout the entire career, even up to the exhaustion of our strength. He who says, at whatever age, "I have made enough sermons," must be held, in order to justify this pretension, to add, "I have made enough progress." Who has reached this point? and though we had succeeded in doing so, it would be necessary to add one word more; I have nothing new to say to my brethren; I have discovered nothing more in religion; in their hearing I have exhausted revelation and Christianity."

. . . Let him who can speak thus return with stretched-out arm to the heap of his old discourses and content himself with redelivering them! But, if revelation and Christianity are inexhaustible, if the ears of the good seed rise unceasingly in the Lord's field, if the tares ceaselessly threaten to choke them, what labourer in the field can imagine that he has a right to think that his task is completed?

It would be absurd to interpret these reflections in this sense, that it is never permissible to preach an old sermon, above all, in those moments of pressure, of fatigue, and of bar-

renness such as we all know. Often even, this return to the past offers a means of study and improvement, which consists in reviewing, in correcting, sometimes in remoulding an old discourse. But the preceding remarks have an aim: they tend to prove that in the career of a pastor, preaching ought to be an effort, a continued, incessant toil, which ought not to languish one day, and which has no limits save that of the activity itself. "The law of the mind," Vauvenargues has said, "is not different from that of the body, which can maintain itself only by a continual nourishment."

It is important to note that this great rule of uninterrupted labour in preaching, is applicable both to pastors who change their church, and to those whose ministry is prolonged and will probably end in the same church. First of all, on both, their very vocation imposes the obligation of progress, which will stop, if the labour stops. In the second place, with respect to the former, because the spiritual needs of the flock differ more than we think and than appears, the preaching must be conformed to the new position occupied by the preacher; with respect to the latter, because in a long career new needs appear, new circumstances, new institutions, new ideas arise, in a word, because the contemporary generation continues its march, he must march with it, and at each station of its route make to it that exposition of the Gospel which will profit it the most.

My ministry has had occasion to pass through these experiences; in vain would I have wished to follow the old ruts. I had no difficulty in recognising that it would be vain to preach at Paris as at Amsterdam, and that another religious sphere necessitated a different announcement and defence of religion. The course of years, the progression of ideas, have taught me an analogous lesson.

Truly speaking, if I were to press these remarks, they would open the question of the adaptation of preaching to our time; nevertheless they are strictly connected with the special subject of this article, the continuousness of the labour of preachers; for these variations in the spiritual state of the flock call for ceaseless vigilance and perpetual study on our part. We must attentively follow its movements, in order to respond to its spiritual needs, which modify themselves more quickly and more frequently than is apparent at a distance; and what, in the midst of the occupations of detail connected with the ministry, in the midst of the inevitable distractions of the life of each day, what is to be done that the labour of preaching may be continuous? There is only one means, very simple, very sure, and which I advise especially my young colleagues to weigh, and, above all, to try, before laughing at it; this is, to think of it every moment.* We may attain with-

out great effort to this concentration of thought; we may, in the study or in the world, everywhere, accustom ourselves to think of texts, of sermons. I must have expressed myself in a very unhappy fashion, were anyone to attribute to me the stupid counsel of thinking only of that; life does not permit us to have only one object of attention. I mean to say only that when the thought of the preacher is free, it is towards his preaching it ought to turn. In following this rule, of which I may say that I have always followed it, and always found it very valuable, we shall make enormous savings of time;† we shall be

an expression which appeared to him happy rose in his mind, he wrote it immediately; a detached distich was preserved in the hope that a place would be found for it, and fragments of his have been collected containing some verses, or even hemistiches, which he proposed to rework and to insert on occasion." A preacher ought to lay hold of texts, of subjects, and of plans of sermons, as Pope preserved his hemistiches.

† The question of the very considerable time which preaching ought to take over the general functions of the ministry depends upon the importance which is attached to it; this point is examined further on. I confine myself here to making the remark that we have no right to choose the method of preaching which demands the least labour, under the pretext of being more free to attend to other duties; this is to sacrifice the pulpit and to subordinate the sermon. Thus I cannot adhere to the too ingenious refinements which Van der Hoeven supports by the authority of his name. This name, little known in France, is that of a professor and pastor of the College and of the Church of the Remonstrants at Amsterdam, whose death, some years ago, excited universal regret, and who balanced by his extraordinary eloquence the glory of that of Van der Palm. In the theses

* This is to treat preaching as Pope treated poetry. "From his attention to poetry," says Johnson in his *Life of Pope*, "he never suffered himself to be distracted. If a conversation offered to him a feature from which he hoped to derive some advantage, he took a note of it; if a thought, if even

able to reserve the more for composition, written or meditated; for studies and for literary and theological readings; we shall gain the immense advantage of being always ready in time, of always having texts in view, of always having a sermon in prepa-

which form an appendix to his theological and historical dissertation upon Philip of Limborch (Amsteldami 1843, 1 vol. 8vo.), he says:—"When it is permitted before assemblies of believers to read sermons or to recite them, or to extemporise them, in a great number of preachers the first method must be pardoned on account of the feebleness of their memory; to a few the last must be conceded on account of want of time; the second as the best, ought to be recommended to all." Evidently here the question of the more or less amount of time disposable has too much influenced the thought of the eminent preacher. Extemporisation ought not to be regarded as a makeshift adopted because we are overburdened with work, and it is independently of the labour it imposes that the best method ought to be adopted. Van der Hoeven's practice opposed his theory; I have it from himself that especially in his last years, he wrote only long sketches and extemporised in great measure.

These economies of time—by means at least, of improvisation—may nevertheless be defended by a more illustrious example, that of Bossuet. Voltaire has pretended that Bossuet, terrified by the reputation of Bourdaloue, did not dare to continue the struggle against the Jesuit, and that, no longer passing for the first preacher of the nation, he liked better to be the first in controversy than the second in the pulpit. Upon this assertion, put forth in the "*Siècle de Louis XVI.*," Voltaire, when we compare the different editions of his works, appears to have tergiversated on different occasions; this, so far as he is concerned, is not at all extraordinary, but, without omitting this jealous emulation of two great pulpit orators, this noteworthy fact remains, avowed by the various biographers of the Bishop of Meux, that, dating from 1669, during the thirty-five last years

ration, and the day approaching, of only having to go forth with it. Undoubtedly, this incessant fixity of thought, this return of the attention towards identical objects demands a certain amount of perseverance and of energy; but though I may meet with

of his life, Bossuet preached at Paris only on rare occasions, neither redelivered nor reclothed his first sermons, did not deign to finish them, and was accustomed to say that he had not written them. "Is this, in fact, to write," asks Cardinal Maury, "only to rapidly cast some ideas upon loose sheets which were afterwards filled with scratches, erasures, corrections, and interlineations?" Bossuet gave all his care to his funeral orations. In this kind he is incomparable, and remains unrivalled. French eloquence has never reached higher. We recognise easily that these are finished paragraphs, and that the author has applied himself to them with all his strength of mind. In his sermons, on the contrary, put together with great labour from detached leaves, from incomplete manuscripts which the patience of two Benedictines has set in order only after years of labour, Bossuet, according to a unanimous avowal is often inferior to himself. We find here and there traits of genius—movements of eloquence worthy of his name; but, except a small number of sermons—that for the taking of the veil by Madame de la Vallière; that upon the unity of the Church, delivered before the assembly of the clergy October 9th, 1681, that upon the duties of kings—the rest betray a negligence at which it is difficult not to be surprised and afflicted. What would it be if, in place of the six funeral orations, we had the collections of the sermons of such a preacher put on the level of such a panegyrist? But before being Bishop of Condom and preceptor of the Dauphin—before 1670, Bossuet evidently had already adopted the system of improvisation from sketches which seems to have put him in the second rank as a sermoniser in comparison with Bourdaloue, and his multiplied occupations appear to have made him persist in it.

some incredulity, I am not afraid to affirm that we shall end by taking a true pleasure in this assiduous tension of the mind towards the duty of the pulpit.

Thus, we can see only a false idea in this counsel of a Catholic rhetorician; "Do not call up thoughts, because you wish to compose a sermon; but compose a sermon, because you have thoughts; God alone works upon nothing." This deceptive antithesis was probably devised to induce this habit of mind. Who does not see the snare in which an ingenious idleness may thus involve itself? Thoughts are found when they are sought.

There remains to us to point out a quicksand, or to prevent an error. In counselling the custom of occupying ourselves thus with our preaching at every moment, we must never content ourselves with a vague, diffuse, dreamy attention, laying hold of nothing, lost in space; but on the contrary, precise, bounded, having its natural limits, its right direction; in other words, the thought must be occupied with a passage, a feature, a narrative of the Bible, with a subject or the plan of a sermon; we must have ceaselessly present some text to be twisted, so to speak, and turned under all its aspects. As an interpreter, we inquire into its meaning; as a moralist, into its lesson; as a philosopher, into its truth; as a theologian, into the Divine intention; as an orator, we seek for the happiest form of exposition for it, and it may be, as a poet, for its poetry, its force, and beauty.

I have preached in these last years upon certain passages which have pursued me, so to speak, a hundred different

times during these years, without my succeeding earlier in contenting myself with the plans I projected for them.*

It is scarcely necessary to insist here upon the necessity of a continued labour in order to soften and sustain the delivery as well as to enrich and to vary the composition. No success dispenses us from this. Every orator who neglects himself, lessens himself, compromises his position and descends from the rank to which he has risen. An assiduous vigilance is indispensable, not only to avoid contracting little by little vices of eloquence, which at first insensible and latent, end by piercing it throughout, but in order to ameliorate what is good, to strengthen the feeble parts, and to augment the hold which we possess upon the attention of the auditory. The career of an orator demands this uninterrupted progress: if he stop, he retrogrades; when throughout a long career the elocution is always alike, without new shades of simplicity, of amenity, of emotion, of energy, when it is always found like itself during so many years, satiety begins to impair the attention.

We ought to read and re-read in the *Brutus* of Cicero (xciii.), the admirable passage in which the prince of Roman orators tells how his friend and rival, the

* For example, upon the universal sovereignty and the subjection of the Son. "For He hath put all things under His feet. But when He saith all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.—1 Cor. xv. 27, 28."

celebrated Hortensius, to whom elsewhere he renders such signal justice, commenced at the beginning of his consulate, to neglect his eloquence which he believed to be unrivalled, at least amongst consular personages, and by what a rapid fall he descended, in the admiration of

his contemporaries, below the competitors whom he had surpassed. Hortensius lost by his error a rank which he had great difficulty in reconquering, when the consulate of Cicero awoke him from his torpor and set him again to work.

ATHANASE COQUEREL.

Notes on New Books.

BY A BARRISTER.

The Apostolical and Primitive Church, Popular in its Government, Informal in its Worship (Edinburgh, Black), is the work of Dr. L. Coleman, D.D., the object of which is to show that Christ and his apostles established a primitive Church without a bishop, and ordained its worship without a ritual.

Dr. John McCaul has compiled *Christian Epitaphs in the First Six Centuries*; a little Hand-Book of Epitaphs to be found in the Catacombs, which is published by Messrs Bell and Daldy.

The Rev. T. P. Dale, M.A., has used the Memoirs of Edward Irving, Kirke White, John Newton of Olney, John Wesley, Henry Martyn, Bernard, Augustine, for a book which he entitles *A Life's Motto*; "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." (Hogg and Son.)

Mr. Elihu Burritt's *Lectures and Speeches* are published by Messrs. Sampson Low and Co.

The Theory of the Arts, or Art in Relation to Nature, Civilization, and Man, is the work, in two volumes, of Mr. George Harris, F.S.A., of the Middle Temple, published by Trübner and Co.

Cadore, or Titian's Country, by Joseph Gilbert, is an examination of Titian's home, birth-place, pictures, and the scenery which they portray. (Longmans.)

Nature-Study, as applicable to the purposes of Poetry and Eloquence, by Henry Dircks, LL.D., is published by Messrs. Edward Moxon and Son.

The History of Cape Breton, a locality on the east coast of North America, probably discovered by Cabot towards the end of the fifteenth century, is written by Mr. Richard Brown, published by Messrs. Low and Co. Mr. Brown resided in the island for a long period, and his book contains some account of the discovery and settlement of Canada, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland.

Sword and Pen, or English Worthies in the Reign of Elizabeth (Edinburgh, Nimmo), is a work in which Mr. Walter Clinton illustrates the Elizabethan period by the lives of Raleigh and Hawkins, Gilbert, Cavendish, Philip Sydney, Drake, and Shakespeare.

Mrs. Josephine Butler has written an interesting *Account of* (her father), *Mr. John Grey*, of Dilston, in a volume which treats of his views on Emigration, Currency, Corn-Laws, Labourers, Taxes, Agriculture, Politics, &c. (Edinburgh, Edmonston and Douglas.)

An Historical Sketch of the French Bar is published by Messrs. Edmonston and Douglas. It is written by Mr. Archibald Young, advocate, and is a history of the French bar from its origin to the present day, with biographical notices of some of the principal advocates of the nineteenth century.

Messrs. Routledge and Sons publish three volumes of amusing incidents, illustrating Irish life and character, and containing anecdotal reminiscences of O'Connell, Lord Norbury, Flood, and other eminent Irishmen, being *Sir Jonah Barrington's Personal Sketches of His Own Times*.

An admirable popular statement, entitled *The Appropriation of the Railways by the State*, is written by Mr. Arthur John Williams, published by Mr. Stanford.

A neat little treatise *On Punctuation*, and on other matters relating to correct writing and printing, by an old printer, is published by Mr. T. Pitman.

B. A. L.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

SERMONS PREACHED IN ST. JAMES'S CHAPEL, YORK STREET, LONDON. By the Rev. STOPFORD A. BROOKE, M.A. London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co.

THIS volume contains twenty-five sermons, the subjects of which are—The Victory of Faith, The Denial of St. Peter, The Lessons of the Cholera, The Naturalness of God's Judgments, The Twenty-third Psalm, The Virgin's Character, The Development of Christ through the Influences of Home, The Development of Christ through the Influences of Outward Nature, The Intellectual Development of Christ, The Spiritual Development of Christ, John the Baptist the Interpreter, Devotion to the Conventional, Devotion to the Outward, The Religion of Signs, Individuality, The Creation, The Baptism of Christ, The Forty Days in the Wilderness, The Transfiguration, The Ascension, The Festival of All Saints, Angelic Life and its Lessons, Angelic Life in Connection with Man, Isaac's Character. We expected when we took up this volume, written by the biographer of the illustrious Frederick W. Robertson, to find much above the average of pulpit literature, both in material and form, in idea, spirit, and expression, for no ordinary clergyman would in the first place have dared to have attempted writing the life of a heretic, and no ordinary man would have written a biography so appreciative, philosophic, catholic

and eloquent. We have not been disappointed. These discourses consist not of views of the Bible got through Church standards. There is nothing here about "our Church," and "our liturgy," &c. Mr. Brooke studies Christianity not under church roofs, but under the vault of heaven, in the light of nature, science, human experience, consciousness and needs. Every paragraph has the chime of strong manhood and high culture. Take the following, which we have fallen on without the process of selection: "Ask yourselves two questions; first, What would be the fate of Christ if He were suddenly to appear as a teacher in the middle of London, as He did of old in the middle of Jerusalem? How would our orthodox religious society, and our conventional social world, receive Him? Desiring to speak with all reverence, He would horrify the one by his heterodox opinions, as they would be called; the other by his absolute carelessness and scorn of many of the very palladia of society. Supposing He were to denounce, as He would in no measured terms, our system of caste; attack, as He did of old in Judea, our most cherished maxims about property and rights; live in opposition to certain social rules, receiving sinners, and dining with outcasts, tear away the flimsy veil of words whereby we excuse our extravagance, our vanity, our pushing for position; condemn with scorn accredited hypocrisies, which we think allowable because they make the surface of society smooth; live among us His free, bold, unconventional, outspoken life, how should we receive Him? It is a question which it is worth while that society should ask itself." "Again, to connect this first question with the religious world; suppose Christ were to come now and proclaim in Scotland that the Sabbath was made for man, or to preach the Sermon on the Mount as the full revelation of God, to men accustomed to hear the Gospel scheme discussed each Sunday; in the first case He would be persecuted as an infidel, and in the second as a heretic. Supposing He were now to speak against sacerdotal pretensions, or the worship of the letter of the Bible, against a religion which sought to gain life from minute observances, or against a Sadducean denial of all that is spiritual (a tendency of the religious liberals of to-day), as strongly or as sharply as He spoke at Jerusalem, how would He escape? The religious world could not crucify Him, but they would open on Him the tongue of persecution."

THE HOMILETICAL TREASURY. By REV. J. LYTH, D.D. Romans to Philippians. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

"THE design of this work," says the author, "is to develop the teaching of Holy Scripture, and suggest material for pulpit ministration and private study. The method adopted is to give a short analysis of a whole paragraph, opening out the general scope and meaning of the sacred writer, and then supply one or more views of individual passages, according to their importance, thus forming a complete commentary on an original plar. As the object is not to supersede thought, but to aid it, the outlines are expressed as briefly as possible, without sacrificing perspicuity. Criticism

is purposely avoided, as it would extend the work beyond reasonable limits; but considerable pains have been taken to ascertain, as far as possible, the true meaning of the text. For that purpose many authorities have been consulted, of which a list is given at the end of this volume." We have already expressed our hearty approval of some parts of this work. There are preachers in all denominations so supernal in their creative resources, that they look down from their lofty altitudes with supreme contempt upon all "*pulpit aids*." Sad to say, after a somewhat long and extensive experience, we have found those transcendent geniuses not only stand most in need of such auxiliaries, but in the slyest way making the most slavish use of them. The fact is, no man is independent of another in thought. One man is made to supplement the deficiencies of another, and the truest man is always the most ready thankfully to avail himself of any means suited to help him to a better discharge of his mission. There is not one minister in a thousand who could do what Dr. Lyth has done in this volume, and it is for his brethren to accept his services, thanking God for his fertile soul and spiritual industry.

SERMONS AND LETTERS. By the late Rev. DAVID SMITH, D.D., Biggar. With a Memoir of the Author, by Rev. DAVID CAIRNS. Stitched. Edinburgh: William Oliphant and Co.

THESE are what are called posthumous discourses, and we are informed that they are selected from sermons fully written out by the author during the last ten years of his life. The discourses both in conception and execution are not much above the average of ordinary sermons. Being Scotch, they are, of course, stiffly orthodox, rigorously conforming to the Assembly's Catechism. The biographical narrative is well written, and very interesting.

THE HARMONY OF THE BIBLE. By REV. ARTHUR RIGG, M.A., Chester. London: Bell and Daldy. Cambridge: Deighton, Bell and Co.

THE subject of this book is not only a good one, but a seasonable one. Both the students of nature and those of the Bible are pushing on their discoveries, for there are discoveries in the latter as well as in the former. And there are those who wish a collision and those who dread it. This little work goes to show that such a collision has not yet occurred, and need not be expected. For a work that is necessarily sketchy, it is very satisfactory, and remarkably suggestive.

ANCIENT LANDMARKS. By J. W. DENNISTON, M.A. London: S. W. Partridge and Co., 9, Paternoster Row.

THIS is a practical and experimental exposition of the Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. Here is no profound thinking, no display of scholarship, no brilliant paragraphs, no sensational rhapsodies. It is a quiet, thoughtful, devotional book, which can scarcely be properly read without much spiritual profit.



A HOMILY

ON

A Prohibited and a Sanctioned Glorying.

“Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches.”—Jer. ix. 23.



WHEN Divine punishment for wrong-doing comes upon a people, there is a proof made of the powerlessness of wisdom, and of might, and of wealth, to do their possessors any good. It was so with the Hebrew nation when Jeremiah announced to it the purposed chastisements of God. *Then* the wise man would find the groundlessness for glorying in his wisdom, the mighty man in his strength, the wealthy man in his riches. Then he who gloried could only be he who understood and knew God the Divine punisher, who is the exerciser of loving-kindness and delights in the exercise of it. The Targum paraphrases a portion of this selected utterance of Jeremiah thus, “Thus saith the Lord, let not Solomon, the son of David, the wise man, praise or please himself in his wisdom; nor let Samson, the son of Manoah, the mighty man, please himself in his might; nor let Ahab, the son of Omri, the rich man, please himself in

his riches." Wherein we may learn that the God of the Bible and of man refuses to tolerate the conceit of knowledge, or the conceit of strength, or the conceit of wealth. God refuses to permit men to persist in 'glorifying in His gifts, however good, instead of glorifying in the knowledge of His being and character, in what He *delights*. A man may not flaunt his fineries of wealth, learning, or strength, in the face of his God when Divine judgment is in process; may not do so at any time with impunity. For God says, let not this be done—let there be no glorifying in wisdom, strength, or wealth.

I. THE GLORIFYING WHICH IS PROHIBITED BY GOD. The tendency and the temptation to self-glorification in the possession of wisdom, strength, or wealth are considerable. For wisdom is a great good, and so is strength, and so is wealth. But each being the gift of God, the giver is to be gloried in, not His gifts; otherwise the glorifying becomes the glorification of self.

First: *Glorifying in wisdom is the glorification of self*, and is therefore forbidden. The mind that knows and the subjects known are both from God, and therefore He is the only ground of wisdom. He is the origin of things; their relation to each other is by His constitution; the operation of all things is comprehended in His laws. Infinite thought is made clear to every thinker—as is infinite mind or infinite being. Whose wisdom may therefore compare with God's? To the truly wise man there is here no glory to himself by reason of the glory that excelleth. "Men comparing themselves among themselves are not wise." The distance of one man from another in respect of learning is oftentimes calculable, but the distance from God is utterly incalculable—being as He is the all-comprehending.

Let us not depreciate wisdom, or we depreciate a Divine quality; participation in which by men is a high privilege and blessedness. For this very reason our glorifying ought of necessity to be not in the wisdom as obtained by us, but in the One Source and Fountain of Wisdom. To see all things

in God is divinely required of us. Justly, for whatever is separated from its root becomes dead. Wisdom disconnected with God becomes folly; for indeed nothing can exist really disconnected with God. The wisdom of a self-glorifier is transmuted by selfishness into folly. So is it that selfishness is self-destructive, being the perversion of all that it touches; for does not selfishness seek to dethrone God and place itself on the throne? Unwise then is the glorying in wisdom, which is not less a Divine gift because it is perverted by self to consequences of evil: for knowledge possessed or contemplated apart from its root puffeth up and so endangers.

There is no discouragement of learning, and of the Universities founded for its promotion in this forbidden rejoicing in wisdom. Scripture commends wisdom to the utmost; but the wisdom commended is that which glories not in itself, but in God our Saviour and Heavenly Father. The Divine law herein conserved, is that no created thing is to glory in itself but in the Creator. The wisest man is the offspring of the All-wise God, to whom the glory of existence and all its blessings is to be given. Christ, as the wisdom of God as well as the power of God, is the true root of all that is wise in man; but we find that Christ glorified not Himself, but rendered all homage to His eternal Father and ours. The law of Christian submission and of adoration is that which we are called to follow. God forbids nothing that is for our good, and His punishments for disobedience are intended to bring us to a higher spiritual condition, wherein as wise and faithful stewards of God we shall in all things seek His Honour and Glory, and so be wise not in our own conceit, but in the wisdom of Christ.

Secondly: *Glorying in strength is forbidden as self-glorification.* Many animals far surpass man in strength, and for these to glory in their powers appears not to be forbidden. The pure delight of exerting their animal energies is an ultimate good to these creatures. But man,

whilst he may find delight in the exertion of his strength, is to know the source of it, and to glory in God the everlasting strength. For the mere joy of superior strength, unreferred to Him from whom infinite energy is derived, is unworthy of one who is formed for fellowship with the Infinite Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ, in the spirit of meekness and love. Wherein we may see the ground of what is forbidden as selfish separateness from God ; of what is commended as healthy adoration of Him who having formed us for so glorious a destiny resists our resistance to His purposes. How small is that which we are tempted to glory in ! How small will the glories in that become ! For the bodily exercise to increase strength profiteth little, whilst likeness to God and contentment therewith is great gain.

The early history of the race exhibits the consequence of glorying in mere physical strength. The giants of early history no doubt performed some astonishing feats of valour, but the ungigantic David of heroic memory, in the inspiration of courage from God, made manifest the weakness of mere bodily bulk and strength. The death of Goliath was the Divine utterance in act, "Let not the strong man glory in his strength." The sling and stone in the hand of the ruddy Hebrew youth were the instruments of punishing the pride of strength.

Let us not sit in judgment on the ancients, as though we were in no danger of making provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof ; even what we may have boasted of as our muscular Christianity, whilst it is a witness against Manicheism, may become, by neglect of the Christian spirit, a glorying in our individual strength, or in our natural thews and sinews, whilst we forget or forsake the God of nations and of individuals. Yet are we not without much to humble us in the growing physical weakness of our English community in common with others. Physical strength is mere weakness when separated from the imparted spiritual might of God in the man within the man.

St. Paul's prayer for those to whom he wrote was that they "might be strengthened with might by God's Spirit in their inner man." It is such strengthening which we need, that we may be delivered from the evil of glorying in our fleshly force. The evil is corrected only by the good which the evil counterfeits.

Sickness corrects our glorying in the forces of the flesh. We find God's corrections of persons and peoples in the events of history. The destruction of Sennacherib's army was the interdict of Jehovah to glory in the might of mere arms. The decline and fall of empires founded in mere force; the overthrow of armies trusting in their own might; the sickness of individuals, and the death of the body of mankind, enforces the inhibition to glory in strength. The Divine counsel coming forth in command is the voice of justice and of love calling us to the true centre of all wisdom and of all power. Not self, but Christ as the power of God must be our glory.

Thirdly : *Glorifying in wealth is forbidden as self-glorification.* The lust of possession has ever been strong in man since he made his attempt at independence of God. Nor is possession of wealth in the form of land, or of cattle, or of machinery, or of money, in itself an evil, but a great and positive good. God Himself possesses the gold and silver and the cattle upon a thousand hills. For this reason man, who holds all that he has from God, is with highest reason prohibited from glorying in wealth of any description. Let us consider how derogatory to the interests of a spiritual being is the finding an object of glorying in a creature of lower nature than himself. This is to deify the material and degrade the spiritual; to debase worship, and to provoke God to anger. For He made the spirit of man in His own spiritual image (God is without body, parts, and passions), that He might ever be the recognized source of its existence, the object of its adoration, the inspiration of its efforts, the parent of its love, the God of its salvation.

Spiritual prostitution consists in the worship of wealth as

well as of learning and of strength. It is a saddening spectacle to behold a spirit entombed in a mausoleum of gold or of silver. Wealth-gods are innumerable, being manufactured by the means of wealth. The lusts of the flesh, the desire of the eye, and the pride of life, are all promoted by means of wealth. Hence the love of display, in which sensuousness delights. Yet the pleasures of the senses are constitutionally right, not wrong. But when sense subordinates the spirit, confusion is the consequence ; for the higher nature cannot abide in subjugation beneath the lower. God Himself will not allow satisfaction with this state. Even the terrors of superstition are a protest against the prostitution of spiritual powers to sensual purposes. Let the God-possessed spirit employ the senses, and all is well ; but when the spirit forsakes God, and becomes absorbed in wealth, the torment of hell in the heart is the awful consequence. Whilst the consecration of wealth to God is spiritual blessedness, the devotion of the spirit to wealth is immeasurable woe.

This warning to the wise, the wealthy, and strong, is for the promotion of their true and eternal well-being, which is imperilled by the good gifts of God, who presents Himself in His unveiled nature in Christ as the absolute and eternal beauty and beatification of man's spirit. Our Redeemer has shown us that we cannot serve God and Mammon—that upon what we make our pleasure, we place our heart ; and His apostle has declared, “if we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption,” whilst “if we sow to the spirit, we shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.”

Let us then neither set up our idols in our hearts, nor in our houses ; neither in ourselves nor in society ; neither in earthly splendour nor in science ; but let us seek the true God and His knowledge ; for He is justly jealous of that which is His true glory, and the absolute blessedness of His children. Estimate we then our real treasures, and we shall lose none of the good, of the health, wealth, or wisdom which may be bestowed upon us.

II. THE GLORIFYING WHICH IS DIVINELY SANCTIONED. "Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, saith the Lord." To glory is an instinct in man; to glory, therefore, is right when the object in which he glories is worthy of him. God here presents Himself as the true object of man's glorifying. There is a gradation set before us. First, God as the object of understanding; second, God the object of knowledge; third, God the object of glorifying.

First: *Understanding God.* "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding." A gracious gift of God is this common human faculty, which is early in life called into exercise. The first lessons of home and of school call forth this power. Every ordinary calculation is the exercise of it. The constant exertion of it is manifested in prudence: all the events of life afford it discipline, and those who fail in it are guilty of folly. It is the fool who fails in understanding, and so perishes. Even the understanding under Divine guidance may penetrate to God, and as far as that faculty is capable, apprehend Him as the Cause of causes, the Creator of the universe, the Father of fathers, the King of kings and Lord of lords. All the evidences of the Being of God may be examined by this spiritual faculty, which although it be not the highest power of the spirit of man, yet is the forerunner of the power which knows God. The calculation of causes and consequences belongs to this faculty; nor may profound spiritual verities be excluded from its grasp. It is capable of conversing with all its proper objects, which in their ultimate source are found cohering in God, who transcends its power to know Him. Yet may man understand God, and thereby advance to the knowledge of Him. It is a true cause of glorifying that any man understands Him who transcends all being. By Divine inspiration even the uncultivated mind may be in communion with Eternal Love.

Secondly: *Knowing God.* This is more than under-

standing Him. It "is life eternal to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent." Yet ere the Word was made flesh, the prophet Jeremiah speaks of knowing God, and glorying in that knowledge. The Spirit of God was given to holy men of old, and by that Spirit they saw with joy the day of Christ, and indeed conversed with the Eternal Word, who gave Himself from eternity a ransom for all. There is given to man by God a power to know Him, to take cognizance of divine qualities inhering in the personality of God.

Our Redeemer declared that as the Father knew Him, and He knew the Father, so He knew His sheep, and His sheep knew Him. What a deep, and blessed, and abiding root, therefore, the knowledge of God has. Relations of each other know each other best from consanguinity, intimacy, and varied affinities. Our filial relation to God in Christ is the true ground of our knowledge of Him. He who brought forth our own being out of His own in His own image, has constituted us to know Him, having grounded our knowledge of Him on His knowledge of us in His Son. Deeply blessed is the knowledge of Christ, for it is the knowledge of God incarnate. We ought verily to be learning of Him every day; for He can make Himself known to us, especially in the breaking of bread in the Holy Sacrament. In the fellowship of this mystery we have our divine education for eternity. The Holy Spirit within us will brood over the ocean of Divine knowledge, and we shall know Him who, like His love—which is, indeed, Himself—passeth knowledge. Inexhaustible is God. Were it otherwise, where would be our hope of immortal blessedness? Eternity will only reveal new depths of God's eternal love and being. Let all our work and life be directed to this end, viz., to know God, for by knowledge is assimilation, and by assimilation of God is augmented knowledge of Him.

Thirdly: *In the understanding and knowledge of God, the*

spirit of man glories and may glory for ever. We meet God in this glorying in Him, for He glories in our glorying in Him. May we not say we glory in Him, because He first glories in us, in His Son. Just as we love Him because He first loved us in Christ. In all things God initiates our spiritual blessedness in Christ. Possessing that initiative, we may enter into the glories of Godhead and of Heaven, whilst we live before God and do His work and will; for *being* and *doing* condition each other.

That which a man glories in truly intimates his character. A man who glories in music or art or learning, is continually found occupying himself in the object of his glory. So with the man who glories in God and the knowledge of Him. Day and night he delights in that law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which making free from the law of sin and death, leads into the very heart of freedom, of immortality, of God.

Let us rightly estimate our being, our possessions in eternity in Christ. Because we are what we are, we are forbidden to glory in anything beneath our God, our Eternal Father, our Divine Prince, the Bridegroom and Elder Brother of humanity. The condition of knowledge of God is fulfilled in doing what we know of His will. Nothing is lacking on the part of God to put us in possession of the true rights of our redeemed manhood. In these rights is our eternal righteousness. Where is room for despair? Where can be greater stimulus to energetic activity than in this rich spiritual reward of knowing God and glorying in that knowledge of Him. The gleaming glories of eternity increase our knowledge of God. For in that increased knowledge is increased likeness to God, and increased glory in Him and through Him. We all seek glory. Here it is for us. Glory. Honour. Immortality. Eternal life. Patient continuers in well doing.

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Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

OUR PURPOSE.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *TEHILIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character, and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) ANNOTATIONS of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The ARGUMENT of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The HOMILETICS of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately educed, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

SUBJECT: *A Song of Thanksgiving in Review of a Troublous Life.*

(Continued from Page 147.)

“For thou wilt light my candle:
The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.
For by thee I have run through a troop;
And by my God have I leaped over a wall.
As for God, his way is perfect:
The word of the Lord is tried:
He is a buckler to all those that trust in him.
For who is God save the Lord?
Or who is a rock save our God?
It is God that girdeth me with strength,
And maketh my way perfect.
He maketh my feet like hinds’ feet,
And setteth me upon my high places.
He teacheth my hands to war,
So that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.
Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation;

And thy right hand hath holden me up,
And thy gentleness hath made me great.
Thou hast enlarged my steps under me,
That my feet did not slip.
I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them;
Neither did I turn again till they were consumed.
I have wounded them, that they were not able to rise;
They are fallen under my feet.
For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle:
Thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me.
Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies,
That I might destroy them that hate me.
They cried, but there was none to save them;
Even unto the Lord, but he answered them not.
Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind;
I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets.
Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people;
And thou hast made me the head of the heathen:
A people whom I have not known shall serve me.
As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me:
The strangers shall submit themselves unto me.
The strangers shall fade away,
And be afraid out of their close places.
The Lord liveth; and blessed be my rock:
And let the God of my salvation be exalted.
It is God that avengeth me,
And subdueth the people under me.
He delivereth me from mine enemies;
Yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me:
Thou hast delivered me from the violent man.
Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the
 heathen,
And sing praises unto thy name.
Great deliverance giveth he to his king;
And sheweth mercy to his anointed,
To David, and to his seed for evermore.”—(Psa. xviii. 28—50.)

HISTORY.—See page 75.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 28.*—“*For thou wilt light my candle; the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.*” For “candle,” the margin has “lamp,” which is better. “Thou wilt light my lamp.” The shining lamp here, as elsewhere, is used as an emblem of prosperity. (Job xviii. 5, 6.) The writer here expresses his assurance that God would prosper him.

Ver. 29.—*For by thee I have run through a troop: and by my God have I leaped over a wall.* Hengstenberg renders this, “For in thee have I rushed upon troops, and in my God I spring over walls.” “In confidence in thee, I am terrified at no assault, contend against all kinds of enemies, leap over all walls and whatever else is opposed to me.”—(*Luther.*)

Ver. 30.—“*As for God*” (In respect to), *his way is perfect.*” He is perfect in all His procedure—creative, preservative, redemptive, and regulative. “*The word of the Lord is tried.*” Tried as metals are tried by fire, and proved to be genuine. “*He is a buckler to all those that trust in him.*” He is the shield of the good. (Psa. iii. 4.)

Ver. 32.—“*It is God that girdeth me with strength.*”—“Who gives me strength. The word ‘girdeth’ contains an allusion to the mode of dress among the Orientals, the long flowing robe which was girded up when they ran or laboured, that it might not impede them; and probably with the additional idea that girding the loins contributed to strength. It is a common custom now for men to run a race, or leap, or engage in a strife of pugilism, to gird or bind up their loins.” “*Maketh my way perfect*”—clears my way before me. God at once strengthened him in his course, and cleared the way before him.

Ver. 33.—“*He maketh my feet like hinds’ feet.*” The hind is the female deer, and is remarkable for fleetness. Swiftmess of foot was prized in the heroic age, as appears from Homer’s standing description of Achilles. “*And setteth me upon my high places.*” Places of security. God gave him strength, facility, and fleetness, to flee into those places of refuge in times of danger.

Ver. 34.—“*He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.*” The following is the translation and remarks of Alexander on this verse:—“Teaching my hands to war, and my arms have bent a bow of brass. The construction is continued from the preceding verse, all the participles having reference to the name of God in ver. 32. The last clause is a strong expression of extraordinary strength, which is mentioned merely as a heroic quality. The translation ‘broken’ rests on what is now regarded as a false etymology. Brass was used before iron in Egypt, and other ancient countries, as a material for arms.”

Ver. 35.—“*Thy gentleness hath made me great.*” In the margin it is, “With thy meekness thou hast multiplied me.” Hengstenberg has it, “Thy lowliness makes me great.” The idea probably is, “By Thy condescension I am exalted.”

Ver. 37, 38.—“*I have pursued mine enemies and overtaken them;*

neither did I turn again till they were consumed. I have wounded them that they were not able to rise : they are fallen under my feet."

The Four Friends give the following elegant translation of these two verses: "I follow after mine enemies and overtake them, and turn not again till I have destroyed them; yea, until I have smitten them, they cannot stand, but fall under my feet." He had not only routed his enemies, but pursued them and utterly discomfited them.

Ver. 41.—"They cried, but there was none to save them : even unto the Lord, but he answered them not." His enemies cried to Heaven for help, but no deliverance came.

Ver. 42.—"Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind : I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets." "I crushed them as dust before the wind, as the dirt of the streets I poured them out." The sense is: Their crushing was only a sort of pastime to me. Exactly analogous are the comparisons in Job xxxviii. 30: "The waters disappear like a stone;" xxx. 14; Zephaniah i. 17.—(*Hengstenberg.*) A similar image occurs in Isaiah x. 6, where God is speaking of Sennacherib: "I will send him against an hypocritical nation . . . to tread them down like the mire of the streets."

Ver. 43.—"Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people, and thou hast made me the head of the heathen : a people whom I have not known shall serve me." In 2 Samuel viii, David is said to have subdued Philistia, Moab, Syria, and Edom, in all of which countries he put garrisons and made them tributary to himself. He not only overcame the strifes of his own people, but subdued the heathen to his authority.

Ver. 44.—"As soon as they hear" (margin: at the hearing of the ear) "*they shall obey me : the strangers"* (margin: sons of the strangers) "*shall submit themselves unto me"* (margin: lie or yield feigned obedience).

Ver. 46.—"The Lord liveth, and blessed be my rock : and let the God of my salvation be exalted." Long live Jehovah! So some render the expression, "the Lord liveth." But this is not dignified enough. Jehovah lives. A far grander utterance. David's God was not like the gods of the heathen—dead, but a living one. "He only hath immortality, dwelling in the light," &c.

Ver. 47.—"It is God that avengeth me." (margin: that giveth avengements for me) "*and subdueth"* (margin: destroyeth) "*the people under me."*

Ver. 49.—"Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name." "Therefore will I praise thee among the heathen, O Lord, and sing praises unto thy

name." "The mention of the heathen indicates that David's experienced mercies were so great, that the praise of them should not be confined within the narrow bounds of Palestine. He can only have a proper auditory in the nations of the whole earth."—(*Hengstenberg*).

Ver. 50.—*Great deliverance giveth he to his King, and sheweth mercy to his anointed, to David and his seed for evermore.* "His king," God, had appointed him to reign over Israel. He had been set apart for the kingly office by a solemn act of anointing. Compare 1 Samuel xvi. 13; 2 Samuel ii. 4—7; v. 3—17; xii. 7. Compare 2 Kings ix. 3, 6, 12: "*To David and to his seed for evermore.*" He had received promises in regard to his successors on the throne. 2 Samuel vii. 12, 16; xxv. 26; Ps. lxxxix. 19, 37.

ARGUMENT—In this section, First: David celebrates his victories as a king past, present, and future. Secondly: Ascribes his power, skill, and success as a conqueror to Jehovah. Thirdly: Concludes by the expression of praise to God as his deliverer.

HOMILETICS.—Homiletically, these verses may be regarded as including, First: *What is gloriously true.* Secondly: *What is morally questionable.*

Here we have—

I. WHAT IS GLORIOUSLY TRUE. The great truths contained in this passage may be divided into two classes, those relating to God, and those relating to man.

First: *Those relating to God.* What are they? There are at least five great truths here concerning the Greatest Being. (1.) *He is perfect in His procedure.* "As for God, His way is perfect." All that the Eternal does is like Himself—perfect. "Just and true are thy ways, O King of saints." His creative, conservative, redemptive, and regulative doings are all perfect. The more microscopically they are examined the more perfect will they appear. (2.) *He is faithful in His word.* "The word of the Lord is tried." His word has been tried like metal in the furnace. (a.) It has been tried by scientific researches. (b.) It has been tried by sceptical criticisms. (c.) It has been tried by the experience of its believers. (d.) It has been tried by the fires of persecution. It has borne the test of all, and it shines now brighter than ever in the institutions, the

literature, and the souls of men. (3.) *He is the guardian of His people.* "A buckler to all those that trust in Him." He has ever been the shield of the true. "Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield. (Gen. xv. 1.) "God is our refuge and strength," &c. (4.) *He is God alone.* "Who is God save the Lord?" "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord." There is no other; the gods of the heathen are vanity. Being the only God He should be (a) supremely studied in all; (b) supremely loved in all; (c) supremely served in all. (5.) *He is absolute in existence.* "The Lord liveth." He lives independently, eternally—lives as the original fountain of all being. Such are the truths found in these verses concerning God. The other class of truths contained in this passage are—

Secondly: *Those relating to man.* It is taught here (1.) That man's *strength* is from God. "It is God that girdeth me with strength." Whatever energy a man has, muscular, mental, or moral, is from God. The strength we have is God's. (2.) His *swiftness* is from God. "He maketh my feet like hinds' feet." The power to move at all is from Him, and the power to move with celerity is a favour which He grants to some. The speed of the racer is from Him. (3.) His *skill* is from God. "He teacheth my hands to war." All dexterity in thought, and art, in mental effort, and bodily labour is from Him. From Him comes the ingenuity of the engineer, the architect, the artist, politician, &c. God is in all skilled labour. (4.) His *greatness* is from God. "Thy gentleness hath made me great." Whatever greatness a man reaches in intellect, character, achievement, or office, must be ascribed to His condescending help. (5.) His *success* is from God. This David expresses here in many forms. "Thou wilt lighten my candle." My prosperity will come from thee. "By thee I have run through a troop." "Have leaped over a wall."—Rushed unhurt through armed battalions, and scaled with safety the walls of sieged towns. "He maketh my way perfect."

Clears away the difficulties that beset my path. "Thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me. Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies," &c.

Thus all he had—all his power, speed, skill, greatness, success—David ascribes to God, and rightly so. We can do nothing without God. The power even with which we *sin* comes from Him. By His power the infidel blasphemes, the thief steals, the impostor cheats, and the warrior, as in David's case, takes human life away. Whilst God gives power to man for good, and for good only, man, alas, often uses that power against right and truth and God Himself. Here we have—

II. WHAT IS MORALLY QUESTIONABLE. There is much contained in the utterances of David that we cannot reconcile with that morality which is contained both in the decalogue and in the teachings of the New Testament. Regarding, as we do, the Divine will as the standard of moral right, and Christ as the Revealer of that will, we are bound to regard much of what David says in this, as well as in other Psalms, as of a morally questionable character. We are not ignorant of the various interpretations of the Psalms put forth in order to justify David's temper and expressions. None of them are satisfactory to us. Why should we attempt to make David a perfect man? The Bible does not. It records crimes of his as flagrant as it is possible for a human being to perpetrate. Nor does he set himself up as perfect. Indeed so impressed was he with his own depravity, that he exclaims, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Moreover, if the bloody wars which he celebrates in this poem were right, why did Jehovah express to him his disapprobation of them? "The word of the Lord came to me," says he, "saying thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight."

But what are the things of questionable morality in this Psalm ?

First : *There is revenge.* What savage revenge comes out in the following utterances. "I have wounded them that they were not able to rise, they are fallen under my feet. . . . Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind. I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets." How stand such utterances as these in the presence of the Divine law, "Thou shalt not kill," "If thine enemy hunger, feed him," &c. ? How in the presence of His example whose life was law, and who, "when He was reviled, reviled not again" ?

Secondly : *There is ambition.* "Thou hast made me the head of the heathen, a people whom I have not known shall serve me. As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me : the strangers shall submit themselves unto me." He seems proudly to exult in the power which, by bloody wars, he had gained over men. How opposed is this spirit to that humility which Christ and His Apostles inculcated.

Thirdly : *There is pious perversity.* He ascribes with pious exultation all his sanguinary achievements to God. That God gave him the strength, quickness, and skill by which he won his victories is true ; but it is, to say the least, questionable whether he gave these for the purpose for which David employed them. It is a sad perversion of the religious spirit in man when bad deeds are ascribed to the Holy One. No sight is more saddening to a devout soul whose ethical culture has been truly Christian than that of warriors, who have slain their thousands, bending at the shrine, ascribing their bloody deeds to the God of peace. Yet, alas ! this is common even in Christendom.

CONCLUSION. How true it is that there is not a man on earth that "doeth good and sinneth not." The best even of inspired men have their imperfections. Whilst we imitate their virtues, let their vices be beacons to warn us. Christ is the only perfect example. Only by the imitation of Him can we grow up into perfect men. How monstrous in this

Christian age to sing such expressions as these in public worship. Let those who have the responsibility of conducting religious services in Christian temples cease the absurdity and even blasphemy of encouraging thoughtless congregations to chant such utterances as are found in this and other of the Psalms of David.

A Homiletic Glance at the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians.

The student is requested to keep in mind the following things, which will throw much light upon the Epistle. First: The circumstances of the writer when he wrote. He was a prisoner in Rome. During his residence there, in "his own hired house" (Acts xxviii. 30, 31), from the spring A.D. 61 to 63, he wrote the Epistles to the Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and to the Ephesians. It is generally supposed that this Epistle to the Ephesians was the first he wrote during his imprisonment. Secondly: The circumstances of the persons addressed. They lived, it is thought, in Ephesus, an illustrious city in the district of Ionia, nearly opposite the island of Samos, and about the middle of the western coast of the peninsula commonly called Asia Minor. It had attained in Paul's day such a distinction as in popular estimation to be identified with the whole of the Roman province of Asia. It was the centre of the worship of the great goddess Diana. Paul resided here on two different occasions. The first, A.D. 54, for a very short period (Acts xviii. 19—21); the second, for a period of more than two years. The persons therefore addressed in this letter are those whom he had converted from paganism, and in whom he felt all the interest of a spiritual father. Thirdly: The purpose of the letter. The aim of the Epistle seems to be to set forth the origin and development of the Church of Christ, and to impress those Ephesian Christians, who lived under the shadow of the great temple of Diana, with the unity and beauty of a temple transcendently more glorious. For the minute critical exegesis of this apostolic encyclical, we direct our readers to the commentaries of Alford, Webster and Wilkinson, Jowett, Harless, Stier, Eadie, Hodge, and last, though not least, Ellicott. Our aim will be to draw out, classify, and set in homiletic order, the Divine ideas reached by the critical aid of such distinguished scholars.

SUBJECT : *The Abjured and Enjoined in Christian Life.*

(Continued from p. 153.)

"Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour; for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your

mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice : and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children."—Eph. iv. 25—32 ; v. 1.*

THE subject of these words, as we have seen, is "*The Abjured and Enjoined in Christian Life.*" We have already noticed the things which are here abjured, which are lying speech, social dishonesty, corrupt language, impious antagonism, and malevolent conduct. We have to notice—

II. THE ENJOINED IN CHRISTIAN LIFE. Christian life is not a negation. It does not consist in the mere deprivation of the morally wrong ; its essence is the spirit of goodness—LOVE. This love, in its *social* character, is forcibly inculcated in these words. We are here taught—

First : That the social love enjoined is *courteous*. "Be ye kind one to another." Christianity requires us to cherish a benignant spirit, and maintain an amiable and considerate deportment towards all mankind. Where this kindness of nature is there will be true courtesy and a gentle bearing in all our intercourse with men. There is a politeness of manner in society which has no heart, no nature ; it is mere mechanism and polish : it is often in alliance with the coarse in thought, the selfish in spirit, the putrid in moral feeling. Such politeness is theatrical. The coarse-minded churl on the stage assumes the costume and plays the part of a gentleman. The spirit of Christianity is antagonistic to all that is coarse, crabbed, and morose. Love "doth not behave itself unseemly."

Secondly : That the social love enjoined is *compassionate*. "Tender-hearted." There is suffering in society,—physical, mental, moral, social. Children of sorrow and trial are found in every walk of life. Towards those Christianity inculcates "tender-hearted" compassion. "Put on . . . as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness,

* The exegetical remarks on this passage will be found at pp. 149, 150.

humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." (Col. iii. 12, 13.) "Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, not rendering evil for evil or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing, knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing." (1 Peter iii. 8, 9.)

Thirdly: That the social love enjoined is *forgiving*. "Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Few men pass through life without meeting with those who commit offences against them; those who seek to damage their secular interests, their social enjoyments, or their moral reputation. How does Christianity require its disciples to act towards them? Not with the spirit of vengeance, but with that of forgiveness. "Forgiving one another." The words contain three facts. (1.) That God hath forgiven Christians. Glorious fact this.* (2.) That God in forgiving Christians has acted in Christ. "As God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you," Θεός ἐν Χριστῷ in Christ. God works through various organs, through material nature, through moral mind, and through Jesus Christ. But it is only through the last—Christ—that He forgives. God is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. It is only in Christ that He works in the sinner that state of mind which separates him from his sin. (3.) That God's forgiveness of Christians is a rule for their forgiveness. "Even as God." How does God grant forgiveness? (A.) Freely. No urging required, no constraint. (B.) Abundantly. "He will *abundantly* pardon." "How oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him, until seven times?" This was Peter's question to Christ, and what was the reply? "Jesus said to him, I say not unto thee until seven times: but until seventy times seven. (Matt. xviii. 21, 22.)†

Fourthly: That the social love enjoined is *God-like*. "Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children." "Become then followers of God as beloved children," (*Ellicott*.) "God is love."

* See HOMILIST, vol. iv., fourth series, page 1.

† See "Genius of the Gospel," page 477.

Seek to become like Him in love. His love is disinterested, compassionate, forgiving, boundless, and ever-acting. This is the standard to be aimed at, nothing lower. (1.) God *can be* imitated in this respect. We cannot become like God in wisdom, power, sovereignty, but we can in love. The child can love as well as the man, and the man as well as the seraph. The God of love hath made all souls to love. (2.) God *must be* imitated in this respect. It is essential to happiness. Heaven is in this love, and no where else. "He that loveth dwelleth in God and God in him."

Fifthly: That the social love is *self-sacrificing*. "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." (1.) The self-sacrificing love which Christianity enjoins is like that *exemplified in Christ*. Christ "hath given Himself for us." "He gave Himself for our sins." "He loved us and gave Himself for us." Christ so loved mankind that He sacrificed His time, energy, peace, reputation, life,—all, to save them. The love that Christianity enjoins must be like this, nothing inferior to this, nothing short of this; self-sacrificing love is the love of Christianity. It is the true heroic element. (2.) The self-sacrificing love which Christianity enjoins is *acceptable to God*. It is "a sweet-smelling savour." Its exhibition in Christ was delightful to the heart of God, and the same self-sacrifice in man can alone make man pleasing in His sight.

CONCLUSION: What a sublime system is Christianity! It abjures in the life of its disciples all that is false, malign, unjust, impure, and profane, and enjoins that spirit of love which purifies, ennobles, and beatifies.

OMNIPRESENCE OF LOVE.

"Love is omnipresent in nature as motive and reward. Love is our highest word, and the synonyme of God. Every promise of the soul has innumerable fulfilments; each of its joys ripens into a new want. Nature, uncontainable, flowing, fore-looking, in the first sentiment of kindness, anticipates already a benevolence which shall lose all particular regards in its general light. The introduction to this felicity is in a private and tender relation of one to one, which is the enchantment of human life; which, like a certain divine rage and enthusiasm, seizes on man at one period, and works a revolution in his mind and body, unites him to his race, pledges him to the domestic and civil relations, carries him with new sympathy into nature, enhances the power of the senses, opens the imagination, adds to his character heroic and sacred attributes, establishes marriage, and gives permanence to human society."—EMMERSON.

Germs of Thought.

THE BYEWAYS OF THE BIBLE.—No. XXII.

SUBJECT : *The Dignity of Human Nature.*

‘How much then is a man better than a sheep?’—Matt. xii. 12.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Fifty-sixth.

THE truth implied in this question is pre-eminently scriptural and Christian. It is not a discovery, but a revelation. If you will look, I., at the state of the world, and II., at the contents of God’s Word, you will see both the correctness and the significance of this view.

I. THE STATE OF THE WORLD. Its human inhabitants, for our present purpose, may be divided into three classes. There are those who know and value Biblical truth ; there are those who know it partially, but do not value and profess it, except in connection with other things which really controvert it ; and there are those who teach openly the very reverse. The first are true Christians ; the second corrupt Christians ; the third none at all. Corresponding to this difference in belief is a difference also in feeling and practice as to the point referred to in our text. Where the Bible is allowed to shine in its native lustre, there human life is regarded as very sacred and precious ; where that lustre is dimmed and clouded by men’s fancies and additions, there the life of man is held cheap in comparison ; and where the light of Scripture is practically invisible, there the life of man is as dross. God’s truth, in short, and man’s life, rise and fall together in the various markets of men’s thoughts : the price of either is a sure index of the price of the other as well.

A few salient illustrations of this truth will suffice. Whatever our own shortcomings as individuals, and whatever our lack of right in some respects to the title of a Christian nation, there is no doubt, as a matter of fact, that we do really honour the open

Bible more than any neighbouring land. Even those who condemn us for so doing, must acknowledge this to be true. But, if public documents and records are at all to be believed, it is equally certain that there is no European nation in which human life is so precious. This is partly evident from the fact (which has never, I believe, been disputed), that the proportion of murders to the population is remarkably small in England, when compared with the proportion in non-Protestant lands ; but it is evident, perhaps, even more from the public opinion of those lands as compared with our own. A deliberate case of life-taking amongst us convulses the whole neighbourhood in which it occurs—sometimes the whole land ; and every individual Englishman feels shocked and outraged by the news. But in some continental countries such an occurrence is little more than an ordinary death amongst us—the mere omission of a name from a catalogue, the subtraction of one from the population ; while, in another country, as you very well know, every successive murder is apologised for and “extenuated ;” and in another yet, every murderer is befriended and concealed. This is the great difference between those lands and our own. The murderer’s guilt here, being execrated by the community, belongs to himself ; the murderer’s guilt there, being despised or excused or patronised, belongs to the nation. The whole “land is defiled.”

We may next compare professing Christendom and heathendom in much the same way. As for Mohammedan nations, *e.g.*, who approach Christianity the nearest and detest it the most, their indifference to life is sufficiently evidenced by the well known alternative of Mohammed himself—the Koran or the sword. And as for pagan nations of all kinds, where will you find any one that shows any tenderness for man’s life ? Certainly not amongst the cannibals of New Zealand and Feejee ; nor yet amongst the slave-trading savages of Africa ; nor yet in two-sworded Japan, where one weapon of death is regarded as not enough ; nor yet in China, where every provincial governor is a kind of hangman, and where one of these officials made the boast that he had ordered seventy thousand executions in his time ; nor yet amongst those supple worshippers of Brahma to whom animal life is so dear. These, indeed, and some sects of Mohammedanism, are the farthest of all from our text. They

respect every life except man's, even the life of positive vermin, as well as of sheep and of cows. Most astonishing, indeed, is their inconsistency ! If the spirit of man be found in man's body, there, if occasion serve, it may be taken without sin ; but if it be found, as they believe possible, in the body of a brute, it is to be honoured and spared. Could ingenuity itself devise anything more opposed to the truth ?

II. THE CONTENTS OF GOD'S WORD. Having seen what man thinks of man's life, we have now to see from Holy Scripture what are God's thoughts on this point. And this we shall do best by considering not alone its direct and implied statements, but also the foundations they rest on. We have the statements in our text itself, and in those parallel passages where it is written, "Ye are of more value than many sparrows,"—as also in the question of St. Paul, "Does God take care for oxen ?"—in the injunction (or prediction) to Noah, that, "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man should his blood be shed ;"—and in the positive injunction by Moses that "no satisfaction" should be taken for the life of a murderer. Of course, also, Genesis i. and Psalm viii., and the peculiar and exalted position there assigned to man, imply the same truth. The life of the king of the animal creation must be the most precious thing it contains.

But that is only the upper foundation of the truth which we are considering. If man were merely the premier-animal, he is frequently so very far beneath his position that his right to any special consideration in consequence is utterly lost. Balaam's case is a miraculous example of what is common enough in the world. Many persons, as mere animals, are much inferior to a faithful dog or good horse. But then we are to remember that, according to the Bible, man is much more than the highest creature on the animal ladder ; he is also the lowest order of the ascending scale of angelic existence ; he is the child of God, in fact, as well as His creature ; the image of His nature (originally), as well as the work of His hands. These things are not **only** stated in Gen. i. 26, 27, and repeated in Gen. ix. 6, and confirmed by the Psalm above named, and by St. Paul's quotation from a heathen poet in Acts xvii. 28, "for we are also His offspring ;" but proved also by the noteworthy fact that the

expression "the sons of God" is applied in Scripture both to men and the angels, but never to the beasts.* All this therefore, as expressly stated in one of these passages, lends a peculiar sanctity to the life of a man. When you take that, you are not only destroying God's workmanship, and trespassing, as it were, on the very borders of heaven, but you are defacing God's own image, and so offering insult to Himself.

Further still, you are despising a nature which is connected with the greatest of God's works. A man's labour and skill are his own, if anything is. This it is which makes slavery such a cruel wrong; this constitutes property, as we call it. Capital is property, because it is labour stored up. Whatever I have laboured for, whatever I have effected by my skill, being the result of that which is mine, is mine, too. And that which I have not only laboured, but suffered for, is even more mine in my own esteem, if not in actual fact. Nothing is so precious as that which has been purchased by many tears, or much blood. It is even so with that Lord of glory who is man like ourselves. As the work of His hands we are precious to Him, even as the cattle and the sheep. As creatures of more wonderful workmanship, we are more precious still. As being, like the angels, his "offspring," and as being, through his incarnation, his brethren (which is even more than they), we advance two prodigious steps more. But it is as the race which He died to redeem, as the reward of His sufferings, the purchase of His blood, that human nature appears like a jewel in the hands of its God. So far as we are permitted to know, that is a distinction by itself; and it is a distinction which carries with it a (created) dignity absolutely unsurpassed. If you value things by the price which is given for them, what can be of greater worth than a man?

Let us beware, then, how we allow ourselves to despise any one of man's race, whatever his position, kindred, character, or creed. However degraded or mistaken, he is still something great. His origin, his capabilities, his destiny are all great. Wonderfully has God made him, borne with him, and done by him, too. The object of so much attention is not to be lightly

* See Job ii. 1; xxxviii. 4; perhaps Dan. iii. 25; Luke iii. 48.

esteemed. If he is nothing else, he is man, and we have seen what that is. Christ, who died for him, was man, too.

At the same time let us not forget the responsible side of these truths. Do not despise others. Do not despise yourselves. You cannot fare as mere animals ; you cannot remain at their level ; there is an intensity of force within you, which, if it do not reach heaven, must touch hell. It has been said of this country of ours, that it cannot carry on a small war. In something the same way no human being can play a small part. Think of this if disposed to live carelessly, without thought of eternity and of heaven. Why should you, being a man, treat yourself as a brute ? Think of this if tempted to despondency ; if afraid to believe in God's care, in Christ's love, and in the grace of his Spirit. Let a sinner be what he will, unless he casts himself away (which thousands do), he is too precious to be lost !

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THE FOREIGN PULPIT.—No. XXIV.

SUBJECT : *Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*

"Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed : blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."—John xx. 29.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Fifty-seventh.

"**B**LESSED are they that have not seen and yet have believed." Fully to understand what these words mean, we need to look at them in three relations. Let us say, then, that if, first of all, they do not justify credulity ; they do, secondly, reprove slowness to believe ; and they are, thirdly, an encouraging recognition of a disposition to believe. I. At first sight, no doubt, it appears as though Christ were pleading for credulity, and especially in the domain of religion : and men have misemployed this expression in order to commend credu-

lity. But this is not the meaning of the words. Credulity, in the sense of blind credence, is without countenance or excuse in the Church of Christ. There is, no doubt, a faith which pays no regard to that which it believes; which thinks that it is enough simply to believe; which is not concerned to know what, or in whom, it believes, or whether it has any good reason for believing, and which accordingly receives whatever is offered for its acceptance. But true faith is not blind credence. It desires, before all things, to know more intimately what it believes, and to get clearer ideas of it, and especially if it is the faith of the heart, which consists of a trustful surrender to another, it has regard to him in whom it is required to believe, inquires exactly into the ground and reason of the thing. It must also be able to justify itself to others.

There is another respect in which true faith is opposed to the blind. It is a sort of spiritual eye in us which sees what the understanding does not see. It opens to us another world from which light is shed on this. This faith is not blind, whereas there lies at the root of credulity a stupidity and obtuseness altogether without excuse. A man's faith is a thing of the utmost importance, and if he thinks that he need not trouble himself to observe what it is that he believes, he is in a condition of mind which altogether forbids the thought that his soul is lifted to God by his faith.

But this blindness is always found in connexion with another fault which does not lie in the understanding but in the heart. Credulity is the inclination to believe certain things because they correspond with our natural inclinations. It therefore always goes hand in hand with slowness to believe, because we put aside that which opposes our natural inclinations. And who does not see the danger involved in this? The Lord, therefore, does not speak in praise of credulity.

But it may appear that all this has no application; how can credulity be thought of, it may be asked, in relation to our faith in Christ? Can faith in Him, no matter from what source, be blameworthy? Where there is true faith, springing from actual affection for the Lord, there is no danger. But credulity is only a perverted shadow of this faith, so that there may be credulity in regard to the Lord Jesus. How many are called by the name

of Christ, and confess Him in words who have never asked what these things mean—who He is or why they should be His? And so it comes to pass that the people who, at times are credulous, become slow to believe and unbelieving when the wind has changed. They accept as easily on the other side as they once accepted on this, and even where this has not been the experience, the confession of Christ is easy to some, because they make it without thought. It would be altogether otherwise with many a man if he happened to find himself where faith is not esteemed, and the worst is that the perverted inclinations of the heart will be sure to come into play. If the true Christ were received where men believe without examining, it would be well. But this is not so, because of the play of the natural and perverted inclinations of the heart. The church has had sorrowful evidence of this. The Reformation was necessary to overflow the Christ which the unrenowned in man had set up, and all need to be on their guard lest the Jesus they received should be another than the Holy Son of God, full of grace and truth—a minister of sin.

II. But now while the Lord does not praise credulity even in relation to Himself, on the one hand He reproves slowness to believe, and on the other, encourages the disposition to believe. The Lord addressed Himself to Thomas, and Thomas was hard of belief, and there is something praiseworthy in this; only it should not be over-valued, for in this particular instance the Lord reproves it. It was hard for Thomas to believe that the Lord had risen. His fellow-disciples testified that they had seen Him, but that did not satisfy Thomas. "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe." We have here apparently a misunderstanding as to the proper nature of faith, inducing the unwillingness to believe which Thomas manifested. He would see, forgetting that seeing is altogether opposed to the nature of faith, and wherever there is slowness to believe there is always a want of clearness as to the nature of faith. Men do not distinguish between testimony and proof. Of course faith requires testimony; it can only receive what is testified. But it does not require proof, for faith is con-

fidence in testimony. *Compulsion* is not to be thought of, whether through the senses or the mind, and this those who are hard of belief overlook. They think that they must believe *of force*, not otherwise; forgetting that this is no longer faith. It is hard for men to apprehend the nature of faith who have not known it by experience, for while on the one side faith is most natural, on the other it is supernatural. And accordingly so many prejudices are entertained in the world about the nature of faith that it is hard to get a clear idea of it, especially of religious faith. First of all there is the opinion that it is simply the reception of certain facts and dogmas, that the heart has nothing to do with it, and that it is a matter of indifference what are its objects. So that it must be confessed that slowness of belief may exist in noble minds. But connected with the noble motive is another which we cannot dignify by that name. The heart again comes into consideration; and one frequent source of slowness to believe is aversion to certain things which are to be believed. If we surrender ourselves to them it will be to the prejudice of the life of the old nature within us, and this is why men hope that it may not be so, and why they find it hard to believe that it is so. And, moreover, pride too comes into play since all faith is an avowal of weakness. It was not otherwise with Thomas; deep as his sorrow was over the death of his Lord, he felt to a certain degree happy in his unhappiness; he felt in the bearing of his sorrow a satisfaction of his pride.

If, then, there is enough of occasion for slowness to believe even in relation to Christ, it must not amaze us if we all have to contend with it. If we cannot distinguish between testimony and proof, if we will have proof to the understanding, we shall never attain to faith. The understanding can pry into the mysteries of the kingdom of Christ, but it needs to be led by faith and aided by the new eyes which are given to faith. False notions about the objects of faith are common. How often men have offered a dogma as the object of faith, and said to us that this faith is sufficient. How often has it been urged that no dogma formed by man is the proper object of faith, but the person of Christ Himself, our Redeemer, who is made unto us sanctification. But this is not the only reason why we are so slow to believe. There is often an aversion in the heart to

believing in Christ. From the very outset it is hard for us to believe. Who of us can point to any one inclined by nature to regard himself as a poor sinner, naturally inclined to receive of grace what most men would fain merit? This is not natural to us, and this is why, in Christ, grace and holiness come to meet us, taking us in their arms, to make of us what our own power never could. It is hard to believe, and this is why the reproof of the Lord is not stern and why He does not reject. He saw that it was not an easy thing to Thomas to believe.

III. Accordingly, he encourages the disposition to believe; and it is this that He praises when He says, "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." What is this disposition to believe? It is of two kinds. First of all, it depends on an insight into the nature of faith, on our seeing that, as our earthly intercourse with men is based on faith, faith is not unnatural, but necessary, and presupposes intellectual activity. Every step in life and learning we take more or less in faith. We begin life with faith, faith in the assertions of those about us, faith in the teachers who instruct us. All that we know of supersensible things rests on faith, and all men regard the principles on which they act as things presupposed which none can prove. Who can offer any proof that good is good and that evil is evil? Why, then, should faith be regarded as unnatural when it has to do with religion? Here, it is true, something else must be added—the drawing of the heart, susceptibility of heart, the need to believe, the heart experience of the objects of faith, the conviction that to receive certain things as the presupposition of faith is worthy and noble, and finally the resolve to believe in harmony with that presupposition.

But when we apply this to Christ, must we not confess that in Him we have the most proper place for the activity of faith? He of whom we can get no clear idea with the understanding, the God-man surpassing all, must be believed in; and he would be a foolish man, especially as a scientific man, who should think that here he must first see. In face of this Christ, the natural object of the faith of the heart, ought the heart to feel no need to believe, no drawing to Him, no surrendering love? Ought there to be no such confession as, blessed is the man who

believes in Him? Alas, for the man who, face to face with Him, feels no inclination to believe! The resurrection of the dead is the object of faith in which the heart's willingness to believe expressly manifests itself. It is the touchstone of the human heart. It is here that the willingness to believe is put to the test. And though with every other object to which the heart surrenders itself, there is danger, here there is nothing to fear; but unconditional willingness to believe is needful. When the Lord says, "Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed," let our response be, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief."

R. ROTHE, *Late Professor in Bonn.*

By R. VAUGHAN PRYCE, M.A., LL.B.



SUBJECT: *The Superiority of Christ's Priesthood.*

"He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."—Heb. x. 9.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Fifty-eight.

THE great design of Paul in writing this epistle was to show the superiority of the new dispensation—the superiority of Christ's priesthood over that of Aaron. The text may be regarded as the sum total of the argument. The old is taken away in order that the new may be established.

Whilst we for a few moments notice some of the leading characteristics of the two priesthoods, we wish it clearly to be understood that we do not intend, as some modern writers have done, to disparage the Jewish priesthood, or the service which it rendered. For it was an institution appointed by God, as well as that of these later days. The Jews, indeed, failing to see its spiritual import, clung to and revered it as though it were perfection itself. Many there were among them who looked beyond, and saw with faith's vision the dawning of a brighter day, the inauguration of a more glorious dispensation. David knew that from his house a son would in the fulness of time

appear, to do the will of God, and that thought he sang in the poetry of his Psalms. And Isaiah from the prophetic mount uttered the gladdening truth that "a virgin should conceive and bear a son," and that his name should be called "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." But with such exceptions as these the great mass of the people were satisfied with what they had, and as far as religion was concerned, they wished for nothing more. They doubtless enjoyed satisfaction in their worship of God, but it was very far from that holy joy which every true believer in the Saviour now feels. So that it is from our present standpoint that we intend making a few observations on the text.

We give four reasons why the old priesthood was taken away, and the new established.

I. The very idea of priesthood bears upon its face two others, SACRIFICE and INTERCESSION.

First: Connected with the old dispensation we have a whole system of ordinances. Numerous were the sacrifices offered, and very elaborate were the services connected with those sacrifices. Turn to the book of Leviticus, and there you will find accounts of sin offerings and trespass offerings—of burnt offerings and peace offerings. These again were subdivided into various parts, and in order that the people might be well instructed in these rites and ceremonies, the whole of the tribe of Levi was set apart for the work.

Secondly: We have various orders of priests. (1.) The high priest. He, as the name indicates, was at the head of the priesthood, and the ceremony by which the high-priest was consecrated and installed in office was, if we may be allowed the term, the perfection of elaboration itself. The high-priest was the mediator between the people and God; it was also his peculiar privilege to enter into the holy of holies. This, however, was only permitted once a year on the day of expiation. (2.) After the high-priest came the priests and Levites; the duties of the priests being to discharge the services of the tabernacle—in later times, the temple; and of the Levites, to assist them in the inferior and more menial parts of the religious duties.

Thirdly: The Jewish priesthood was a splendid ritualism,

and as we contemplate it, how simple must our own appear. Now we have not *many* priests, but *one*—not *many* sacrifices, but *one*, and how superior the sacrifice ! Then the blood of bulls and goats atoned for the people—now it is the blood of the priest himself ; then it was necessary that the sacrifices should be made day by day, but the Great Victim, the Lamb of God, was only offered once, and now “He ever liveth to make intercession,” and this sacrifice and intercession availeth for all who come unto God through Him.

The first part of our subject may be summed up thus—the first dispensation consisted of many priests, many sacrifices, many ordinances. The second in one priest, and one sacrifice.

II. First : It was a distinctive feature of Aaron’s priesthood that it belonged to the Jews only. The sacrifices were offered for the Jewish people, and the peculiar ceremonies only the Jews could understand. On the other hand, the priesthood of Christ and the sacrifice of Christ are as much marked for their *world wide* range.

Secondly : Because this doctrine was so catholic in its principles the Jews could not understand it. Even the apostles were reluctant to declare the blessings which resulted from a belief in the sacrifice of Christ to other nations, although they had received the injunction, “Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them,” &c. (Matt. xxviii. 19.) And it was not till the express command came to Peter, that he shook off his sectarianism and declared the truth to Cornelius. This was a result of the Jewish prejudice which still clung to them. They did not in the outset of their ministry feel what one of their number afterwards so beautifully expressed, “If *any* man sin, we have an advocate with the Father.” (1 John ii. 1, 2.)

Thirdly : Here again, then, we have the superiority of Christ’s priesthood. Under the old dispensation, many priests, many sacrifices, and comparatively *few* benefited. Under the new dispensation, one priest, one sacrifice, and *all* embraced. “Therefore is the first taken away that the second may be established.” One *practical suggestion*—is there not amongst the various churches of the present day too much of the *spirit* of Judaism, and therefore too little of the spirit of Christ ?

III. First : This at once appears evident from the very nature of the case. The Jewish priesthood was a type of another that should follow. And just as the substance is superior to the shadow, so the priesthood of Christ is superior to the Aaronic. The one is *innate*, the other *reflexive*. Aaron's priesthood was "After the law of a carnal commandment," but Christ's "After the power of an endless life."

Secondly : Because Christ's priesthood abideth ever, so all those who are burdened and bound with sin may *hope*. For so long as sin reigns, so long will Jesus plead for all who call upon His name.

IV. First : We have before remarked that the Jewish priesthood was a splendid ritualism, and whatever is ritualistic must in a greater or less degree be sensuous. It gratified the eye and ear, and as far as yielding to a sense of awe which comes over the spirit, the heart. But it did not change the heart, and raise the people to a higher standard of moral and religious truth. How could it? No ; Christ had died, and therefore the worshippers knew not of His love. And it is the great love of Christ as manifested in His life and death that attracts and elevates mankind. We in imagination stand in the Jewish temple, and see before the altar the priest with bowed and reverent head. We see the clouds of incense which arise, and hear rich strains of music echoing along that temple's roof. And we feel it is very beautiful, that there is something majestic in worshipping God like this, but we strive in vain to find the peace and joy we seek. We are more inclined to *fear* than *love*, and when the service is performed, when there is no more to attract and please, a sense of desolation and loneliness prostrates the soul. But when we look in faith to Christ alone ; when we see Him as the Lamb that was slain, but who now liveth to intercede ; when we hear the words, "I am the way, the truth, and the life ; no man cometh unto the Father but by me," what light breaks in upon the darkened soul, what radiance shines upon the pathway along which we walk. A new life throbs in every pulse, and we feel a calm reliance upon the love of God, an abiding peace which passeth all understanding.

Here again note the contrast. The Jewish priesthood had

more to do with the eye, the ear. That of Christ with the heart, the conscience, the soul.

CONCLUSION. And now what is the one great practical thought suggested by the subject we have been considering? Simply this—

Are we, seeing God has seen fit to remove the first system in order that the second may be established, to endeavour to bring back the first; are we to take the complex and the sensuous in preference to the simple and the spiritual? The church of Rome says, Yes. And since her institution in the fifth century she has always said so; in this she has been consistent throughout, however opposed to Scripture her dogmas, however untenable her arguments. She has never asserted that it is a simple religion she has to teach, or that it is through the one priest that we can have access to the Father. We leave her with her systems and formulæ, it being no part of our design to enter into the field of polemical warfare now.

Are we to go back to the ritualistic and sensuous? The Church of England, at least a great and influential part of that Church, says, Yes. It is the old form of worship and we will cling to it. It served our fathers well and we will adopt it now. We leave these, with their arguments of antiquity and grandeur, and ask once more, Are we to go back to the ritualistic and sensuous?

And the answer comes from the intellect of an enlightened Christendom, and from the green islands of the sea where the glory of the Cross has only just been told, and where the blight of scepticism has not withered the ardour of the first love. From North to South, from East to West, that answer flies, and thousands in one voice, loud as many thunderings, reply, *We will have no altar but the mercy seat, and no priest but Christ.*

Haslingden.

A. F. BARFIELD.



SUBJECT : *The Bright and Morning Star.*

"The bright and morning star."—Rev. xxii. 16.

Analysis of *Horily the Eight Hundred and Fifty-ninth.*

THE twin title of our Lord immediately preceding the present is, "the root and offspring of David." The former, which we have already considered, refers to the past of human history ; the latter to the future. And we may take it as suggesting, that He who is rooted in humanity by birth and by descent,—its genuine offspring, is henceforth to be its great guiding light,—the Head, the Ruler of the Race to which He thus belongs.

I. *The title declares the brilliance of His lustre.* Amongst the Orientals, the morning star is the favourite emblem of a great ruler, a martial leader, or a wise teacher. In those clear cloudless skies, the morning star shone with a peculiar and most attractive lustre. As, lonely in its magnificence, gleaming from the background of the night, it ushered in the day, it occurred at once to the poetry of the East as a striking symbol of those great men, the glory of whose character or exploits had seemed to light up the world. It is applied by Isaiah to the magnificent monarch of Babylon—"How art thou fallen, O Lucifer, son of the morning !" Some of the classic poets seem to make the same allusion. Generally, we may say that what has been thought to qualify for such distinguished representation is glory, as men deem glory—the glory of arms, or kingly pomp, or power. Now Christ claims this epithet on the ground of possessing the truest glory ; that of being the Witness for the Truth, of being the truth itself, and thus of bringing minds under His sway. Compare this title which Christ gives of Himself in the vision of St. John, with that He gives of Himself in the gospel ; "I am the Light of the World." In that Light alone can the solution of the great world problems be found. Philosophers, truths, teachers, that were in the world before Him—these were but so many reflected rays sent off from Him ; not that Light, but sent to bear witness of that Light. And, like the star, fixed in its position in the heavens, He lighteth every man that cometh into the world. His lustre cannot now be withdrawn, nor can men refuse to open their eyes to its presence. He is the Morning

Star of all humanity, the brightest light that has ever dawned upon the world,—that guides it onwards to the eternal day.

II. *It implies the Power of His Attraction.* Man can be moved and drawn only by man. Hence the wisdom of “God manifest in the flesh.” By no other way are men’s hearts to be governed and subdued than by One who holds the reins of sympathy, One like us, yet infinitely above us. We do not so much marvel at the fact of the incarnation, as we admire its wisdom. How exquisite the provision that He who is the true offspring of humanity, should first be presented in His all perfect virtue to our eyes, and then should be fixed above us as our guiding Light. He who comes as a brother from the bosom of the same family, is designed to attract our hearts by secret sympathy. Were He simply essential God, were He merely an illustrious angel, He could not so touch our hearts, and claim our love. Jesus attracts us because He is Man in the sublimest aspect of man. Christ was “the purest and the noblest part of the world, which was the sphere and orb wherein, during his humiliation, He was pleased to move. He was the very flower, the extract and quintessence of mankind, uniting all the perfection of it in his person, without any alloy or mixture of imperfection. Upon which account, David, by the spirit of prophecy, calls him ‘fairer than the sons of men,’ as being ‘anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows,’ that is, the graces of the Spirit descended not on Him in those minute measures and stinted portions that they do upon other mortals. Their drop was nothing to His ocean.” (*South.*) Above the world then, He is above it now; and men look up to Him by the light of His holiness, their Morning Star.

III. *It implies the Fixity of His Office.* Amidst the progress and the changes of human thought, the revolutions of opinion, the advances or the retrogressions of moral and spiritual life, He abides a steady, ever-shining light. All others are flickering torches, throwing a momentary and misleading glare, then waning and dying out.

“Our little systems have their day,
They have their day, and cease to be;
But Thou, O Lord, art more than they.”

From Thee they derive whatever use they have, and when they reflect not Thee, they must be flung aside. Thou art a Guide better than all systems ; Thy light alone is direct and pure. Our teachers in morals and religion come and go ; they have their place and authority for a time, and then their influence decays, and they cede their post to others ; but not so with thee, the unfading Light, the immoveable Star ! The days die out ; the generations pass away ; but each day beholds the star arise and usher in its morning ; and all generations behold it the same. Men pass through their struggles and sorrows ; but high above the wailing and the moaning, the star abides watchful over the scene. By and by, it will usher in the last morning, and the blaze of the eternal day. "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath ; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner, but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished."

IV. *It is emblematic of the hope of humanity.* The morning star is the herald of the dawn. So our hope of a morning for humanity is in Christ. Our only hope is in Him. When we look around, it is still a most saddening prospect that the face of the world presents ;—vast masses of our fellow-men stagnant, wrapped in pestilential mists of vice and error ; immense tracts of barren and desert ground ; places where we may say that only wild beasts howl amidst ruins and desolation. The world is helpless, if the world be left to itself. But the world is not left to itself. There is a divine energy in the seed of the woman, which shall yet bruise the serpent's head. We believe that united to Him its Head, humanity has not toiled through centuries of error in vain. He is one with us ; He has come to His own, and knows its wants, its weakness, its sorrow, and its sin. He shines down upon us now, with powerful and influential brilliance ; and He will be associated with all our future struggles as He has been with all our past. Therefore, as Christians, we are confident and hopeful. We work at present in the darkness, but we know that the Star is above our heads, announcing approaching day. As we bend at our

labour and the noise of our implements sounds monotonously in the gloom, we can feel that the shadows are passing away, and the faint, growing light shows that we are making way. Nor will we cease from toil, nor will we fail of hope, nor will we faint from weariness, till morning surprises us, and grows to noon, and noon shall be filled with our triumphant shout, "We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, who art and wast and art to come, because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned!"

Forest Hill.

E. JOHNSON, B.A.

Variations on Themes from Scripture.

(No. XIV.)

SUBJECT: *Short-Sighted Seers.*

"THE prophets shall become wind, and the word is not in them." So testified Jeremiah, the true prophet, of those who set up to be true prophets too, but in whom the word was not, to whom the word was entrusted not. Words, words, words, they could utter; but not the word. To apply a passage from the bard of Rydal,—

"Why sleeps the future, as a snake enrolled,
Coil within coil, at noon-tide? For the word
Yields, if with unpresumptuous faith explored,
Power at whose touch the sluggard shall unfold
His drowsy rings."

But so much may depend upon an if. And unpresumptuous faith is not to be depended upon in all cases, whether of self-asserted prophets, or self-constituted expositors of prophecy, or their too docile disciples.

When He of whom the prophets did write was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, His answer was, that the kingdom of God cometh not with observation. The tone of the answer, take its literal import how we may, scarcely favours the daily newspaper student of eschatology.

Seers may set up to be very far-seeing who are yet the reverse of long-sighted. Lo here! is so easily said. And when it turns out to be wrong, it is just as easy to say, Lo there!

Not the least sagacious essay in the well-known volume of an octogenarian essayist, is that in which he adverts to the fashion, in one section of the "religious world," of definitely stating the date of the last day, and in which he is fain to own his persuasion that the event will not happen very soon, and his doubts whether anybody knows when it will happen. "I know very well, for I read all that is written on this subject, . . . that many learned men and grave divines . . . have fixed the exact date of the end of the world. Notice has often been given of the time before it came, and after the time was past they have found out that they were mistaken, and so very properly they give notice again." It is like the Tory predictions of instant invasion derided in Peter Plymley's Letters: "The *Morning Post* fixed the invasion sometimes for Monday, sometimes for Tuesday, sometimes (positively for the last time of invading) on Saturday." Shrewd as homely-witted is the *caveto* of the Biglow bard,—

"My gran'ther's rule was safer'n 'tis to crow:
'Don't ever prophesy—unless ye know.'"

Hume speaks of it as affording a violent prejudice against almost every science, that no prudent man, however sure of his principles, dares prophesy concerning any event, or foretell the remote consequences of things. But the unabashed presumptuousness of some amateur seers, frustrated in their previsions over and over again, is almost as ridiculous—or sublime; for from the sublime to the ridiculous there is said to be but one step—as the profane complacency of Thomas Goodwin, when his prediction of his patron, Cromwell's, recovery from his last illness, a prediction professing to be a revelation from on high, was falsified by the event. To exculpate himself, the audacious preacher is said to have exclaimed in a prayer to God, "Thou hast deceived us, and we are deceived." Rich and rare is the candour of a Joseph Wolff, D.D., confessing himself presumptuous as an expounder of minute prophecy. Not content with peculiar millennial views, and some private opinions of his own as to the Personal Reign, he seems to have taught that the

latter event was to take place in the year 1847. For this, as we find in his autobiography, Dr. Wolff was well laughed at, though very good-humouredly, by the Indian hero, Sir Charles Napier, two or three of whose characteristic letters he quotes; and the Doctor avows himself heartily ashamed of his false prophecy: "Wolff now bitterly regrets that he ever fixed a date." Another Indian hero might have taken Wolff to task on the same topic. On his way to Agra, we read, his palanquin stopped at the bungalow of Captain (afterwards Sir Henry) Havelock, with whom he discussed religious subjects, and "Wolff fixed the end of the world to take place in 1847. 'If now,' he writes in his autobiography (1861,) 'an opponent were to ask Wolff, why did you fix that date? he has but one answer to give, which he candidly gives to every one, Because I was a great ass.'" He, and the like of him, might shrink from renewed guesses and foretellings in the spirit of that sage counsellor in Shakespeare, who deprecates being pressed to give an opinion on a certain knotty question,—

"I dare not

Say what I think of it, since I have found
Myself in my uncertain grounds to fail
As often as I guessed."

William Sedgwick, fanatical prophet and preacher, notorious in the annals of our seventeenth century, has his fellow in every other century;* nor are the Samuel Butlers wanting, either, to stigmatise the seers, just as Sedgwick is scouted in *Hudibras*:

"When stars do fall, 'tis plain enough
The day of judgment's not far off;
As lately was revealed to Sedgwick,
And some of us find out by magic."

Casca, in "*Julius Cæsar*," being inclined to accept as intelligible portents the omens which were the talk of the streets, Cicero

* In the previous one, Michael Stifel, the celebrated German algebraist, a Lutheran clergyman, predicted that the end of the world would take place in the year 1553. A fellow-countryman of his, also a mathematician of note in his day, had already fixed on the year 1524 for that event. A still more eminent mathematician than either, our own Napier, asserted that it would occur between the years 1688 and 1700. Somehow, hard-headed men of genius in science have appeared to be curiously liable to illusions and delusions in matters apocalyptic. Witness Sir Isaac Newton in particular.

cautions him against hasty interpretation, in words that evangelical interpreters might condescend to mark, learn, and inwardly digest :

“Indeed, it is a strange disposed time :

But men may construe things after their fashion,
Clean from the purpose of the things themselves.”

Horace Walpole, writing amid the wars and rumours of wars of 1769, tells a distant correspondent that “Whiston, and such prophecy mongers, were very unlucky to die before the present era. They vented their foolish knowledge and foolish conjectures in foretelling the downfall of the Pope and Turk, when there was not the least ground for such surmises. There is not a verse in the Revelations that would not set up a prophet now.” The true Strawberry-hill sneer marks a passage written a year later : “Nor do I interest myself for the honour of prophecies. If the Church pretends, for want of knowing what better to do with it, to wrench Daniel’s ‘times, and time, and half a time,’ to the present case [of Russia’s triumph over Turkey, Sept., 1770], it can only be by the job being accomplished in ‘half the time’ that anybody else expected ; and let me tell you, it is a good deal for prophecy to come a quarter so near any truth.” In a like spirit Dean Swift flouts Dr. William Lloyd : “Yesterday,” we read in the *Journal to Stella*, July 1, 1712, “the old Bishop of Worcester, who pretends to be a prophet, went to the Queen by appointment, to prove to her Majesty, out of Daniel and the Revelation, that four years hence there would be a war of religion ; that the king of France would be a Protestant and fight on their side ; that the Popedom would be destroyed, &c. ; and declared that he would be content to give up his bishopric if it were not true. . . . I am told Lord Treasurer confounded him sadly in his own learning, which made the old fool very quarrelsome. He is near ninety years old.” Which mention of age reminds us of the octogenarian essayist already cited, who submits that those who fix the end of the world very soon, as for example in the year 1900, or even much earlier, “as some very learned men do,” are hardly consistent in doing this, and at the same time marrying and giving in marriage, and scraping together gold, and dealing in railway shares, and looking after the sale of their books. “For all

which inconsistencies my long experience has brought me one general explanation, . . . that they do not believe what they say." Charity, that hopeth all things, would fain take the rule, as a rule, the other way, and make exceptions of the consciously insincere. Shallow conceit is commonly the characteristic of the tribe. They know no better. Their disciples, or dupes, if that must be the word, *do* come to know better in time. They get to feel like the quaint rhymester of the Biglow Papers,

"Not thet I'm one that much expec'
Millennium by express to-morrer;
They *will* miscarry,—I rec'lec'
Tu many on 'em, to my sorrer."

And once enlightened as to the real complexity of the subject, and the veritable incompetency of those who affect it, of the latter they come to think pretty much what the Prince thinks of, and says to, Archbishop Hastings, in Shakspeare's "King Henry IV.,

"You are too shallow, Hastings, much too shallow,
To sound the bottom of the after-times."

Not that any such rebuke will suffice to deter these adventurers from sounding on that dim and perilous way.

FRANCIS JACOX, B.A.

Biblical Criticisms.

Passages in which the Remission of Sin is connected by Apostolical Writers with Christ; either His Life, or His Death, or His Resurrection.

I WILL recall to the memory of my readers in the first place passages wherein the work of our Redemption and Salvation is attributed to our Blessed Lord, without further specification. Thus we read, He shall save His people *αὐτὸς σώσει*, Matt. i. 21; The Son of Man came to seek, xviii. 11; This day is born a Saviour, Luke ii. 11; Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, *τὸ σωτήριόν σου*, ii. 30; The Son of Man came not to

destroy men's souls, but to save them, ix. 56 ; Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, John i. 17 ; God sent His Son that the world through Him might be saved, iii. 21 ; We know that this is the Saviour of the world, the Christ, iv. 42 ; The bread of God is that which came down from heaven and giveth life to the world, vi. 33, 50, 51 ; Thou hast words of eternal life, vi. 63, 68 ; The Son shall make you free, viii. 32, 36 ; If a man keep My saying, viii. 51 ; No one shall pluck them out of My hand, x. 28 ; I am the Resurrection and the Life, xi. 25, &c. ; I came not to judge the world, &c., xii. 47 ; I am the way, the truth and the life, &c., xiv. 6 ; Because I live ye shall live also, xiv. 19 ; That He should give unto them eternal life, &c., xvii. 2, 3 ; That ye may believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and that believing, &c., xx. 31 ; Baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus for the remission of sins, Acts ii. 31, 38 ; (comp. iii. 19, xvi. 31) ; There is none other name in which...iv. 12 ; God raised Him up to be a Leader and a Saviour, v. 31, xiii. 23 ; Preaching peace by Jesus Christ, x. 36, xi. 43 ; To Him give all the prophets witness that through His name, &c., x. 43 ; Through Him is remission of sins now proclaimed to you, in Him ye are justified, xiii. 38 ; Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we believe that we shall be saved, xv. 11 ; Be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of...xxii. 16 ; We have peace through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom also we have obtained our access, Rom. v. 2 ; We have been made free from sin, vi. 18, 22 ; The love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord, viii. 39 ; Through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, 1 Cor. i. 21, (comp. v. 18) ; Christ was made to us from God wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, i. 31 ; In order that through His poverty we might be made rich, 2 Cor. viii. 9 ; God accepted us (*or* showed mercy to us) in the Beloved, Eph. i. 7 ; God's eternal purpose which He proposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, in Whom we have, &c., iii. 12 ; As God in Christ forgave us, iv. 32 ; He is Himself the Saviour of the body, v. 23 : As Christ forgave us, so also do ye, Col. iii. 13 ; Jesus who delivereth *or* is delivering us from the wrath which is coming, 1 Thess. i. 10 ; Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, 1 Tim. i. 15 ; I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they too may obtain salvation, the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, 2 Tim. ii. 10 ; Make thee wise unto salvation, &c., iii. 15 ; Waiting for...the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, Titus ii. 13 ; When He had by Himself effected the purging away of our sins, Heb. i. 3 ; The Captain of our salvation, ii. 10 : Our great High Priest, who has passed through the heavens, iv. 14 ; Our forerunner Jesus,

vi. 20 ; Introduction of a better hope by which we draw nigh to God, vii. 19 ; He is able to save to the uttermost, vii. 25 ; Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, xii. 2 ; He called us out of darkness into His marvellous light, 1 Pet. ii. 10 ; Ye have returned to the Shepherd, &c., ii. 25 ; Your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake, 1 John ii. 12 ; He was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil, iii. 8 ; The Father sent the Son to be Saviour of the world, iv. 14 ; This life is in His Son, v. 12, 13, 20 ; Of the common salvation, Jude 3 ; He that conquereth as I too conquered, Rev. iii. 21.

C. A. SWAINSON, M.A.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

THE WORTHINESS OF CHRIST TO RECEIVE MAN'S RICHES.

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive . . . riches."—Rev. v. 12.

ELSEWHERE we have expounded the context.* We learn here that all heaven, with its "ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands," agree in declaring that Christ, who is in the midst of the throne, is *worthy* to receive not only power, wisdom, strength, honour, and glory, but *riches*—all riches, mental and material. Who will gainsay the testimony of witnesses so *enlightened*, so *honest*, and so *numerous* ? We shall regard the word as referring to *material riches*—gold. Gold is precious in more senses than one : it is a moral potentiality,

and hence it is thought of in heaven and sung about there. Our subject is—Christ is worthy to receive man's worldly wealth. How can He receive it? He is far up the heights of the universe, beyond the vision and the reach of man. How do the monarchs receive the tributes of their people? Not *directly*, but through established agencies. Christ has established an agency on this earth for this purpose, and that agency is His Church. Whatever is done to further the evangelising views and well-being of His Church, He regards as being done to Him. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Why is Christ worthy to receive your wealth?

I. BECAUSE HE IS THE ORIGINAL PROPRIETOR OF IT. The gold that any man

* See HOMILIST, first series, vol. ii., page 199.

holds in his hands is his in a very secondary sense; his property a few years ago was in the possession of others, and a few years hence it will pass from him into other hands. All material wealth belongs to Christ. "The beasts of the forests are mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." "The wild beasts of the field are mine." "Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine." (Job xli. 11.) "Behold, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, is the Lord's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is." (Deut. x. 14.) When we have given our all to Him, it behoves us to say, "All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." (1 Chron. xx. 19.) Man is but the *trustee* of his wealth, Christ is the proprietor.

II. BECAUSE HE HAS ENABLED YOU TO PROCURE IT. Why have you wealth more than others? Has it come to you through *heirdom*, *legacy*, or your own *industry*? In either case you have it through Christ. Perhaps you ascribe it to your shrewdness, your industry, your management, but whence came these? All business *aptitudes* and *opportunities* are the gifts of Christ. All the conditions by which your wealth has been attained are according to His arrangement.

III. BECAUSE HE GIVES YOU THE QUALIFICATION TO ENJOY

IT. Do you enjoy your wealth; enjoy all the conveniences, comforts, and powers which it imparts? If so, why? All do not. The *miser* does not; the *invalid* does not; the *idiot* does not. Who gave you the unmiserly spirit, the bodily health, the mental capacity by which you enjoy your riches? All the qualifications that you have for enjoying your property are His gifts.

IV. BECAUSE HE WILL MAKE THE BEST USE OF IT. First: *The best use of it for yourselves.* There is no better *investment*. In truth it is for your sake He wishes you to give it to Him; He could have planted churches on every hill, schools in every valley, written His Bible on the broad heavens, but He knew right well that you would be better blest by contributing of your property to the diffusion of His truth. Your contributions to Him serve you in many ways. (1.) Serve to test your character. Until you can give *freely* that which you value most, what evidence have you of your love to Him? None. (2.) Serve to detach you from materialism. Wealth tends to materialize the soul. Every contribution to spiritual objects counteracts the tendency. It is another step up the ladder whose foot is deep down in materialism, but whose top reaches to the holy heavens of spirit and love. (3.) Serve to ennoble your character. It is

a great thing to be *trusted*, to be thrown upon your honour. Christ trusts you. Secondly: *The best use of it for the world.* When you are gone, Christ's Church will be here working with the means you have entrusted to it, and working to spread *truth, virtue, and happiness* through the world.

CONCLUSION. "Worthy is the Lamb, then, to receive riches." Don't shirk collections, don't avoid them as trials. Hail them as blessings, and remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ when He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

MAN'S DUTY IN RELATION TO GOD'S REDEPTIVE TRUTH.

"For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments."—Ezra vii. 10.

THERE are few Bible biographies more interesting and instructive than Ezra's. (State the leading facts.)

The text indicates man's duty in relation to God's redemptive truth. The "law" here refers undoubtedly not to God's truth in general, but to that truth which He has condescended to reveal to man as a fallen being. In relation to this he has to do three things—learn it, practise it, and preach it.

I. He has to LEARN it. "Ezra had prepared his heart

to seek the law of the Lord." Two things are to be attended to in our endeavours to attain a knowledge of the truth which God has revealed to fallen man. First: It must be sought for *where* it is to be found. Where is it to be found? Truth from God may be found written in the volume of nature, written in the facts of human history, written in the constitution of the human soul: but the truth from God which man wants as a sinner is to be found in the book which we call with emphasis, the Bible. It must be sought for in these documents; it is here under the cover of facts and histories, metaphors and poetries. Secondly: It must be sought for in the *manner* in which it is to be found. There is a right way of seeking it as well as a wrong way. "Ezra had prepared his heart to seek" it. It must be sought. (1) With devout earnestness. It must be regarded as the supreme good (2) With persevering diligence. It must be searched for as hidden treasures. God's truth to enlighten, purify, and bless humanity is in the Bible, but few men have got it, and *why*? They don't search for it.

II. He has to PRACTISE IT. Ezra had not only "prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord," but "to do it." The truth that God has revealed to sinners is not a subject for mere speculative thought or

logical debate, it is a practical system. First: *The doing of it is essential to a thorough understanding of it.* "He that doeth the will of God shall know of the doctrine." There are some things that a man may understand without practising. A man may understand architecture who has never built a house, agriculture who has never cultivated a farm, but no one can understand theology unless he has practised it. The ideas don't get *reality, life, and proportion* until they are translated into deeds. Secondly: *The doing of it is necessary, in order to be really benefited by it.* The mere knowledge of it will avail but little. "Blessed is he that heareth the word of God, and *doeth it.*" Truth, as ideas in the mind, is only like floating clouds, rolling undischarged over the barren soil; but truth as deeds, is like living streams so intersecting each other, and winding in every direction, as to touch the whole region into life, verdure, and beauty.

III. He has to PREACH it. "And to teach in Israel statutes and judgments." God's truth to sinners is to be taught by men. He has put the treasure in "earthen vessels." But none can teach it but those who have learnt it and practised it: those who have not only got the theory, but who have reduced it to an art. This is the right preaching of

truth, not mere verbal oratory, not professional talk, but *life* preaching. This life preaching is, First: *The most intelligible.* Children understand actions. Secondly: *The most incontrovertible.* You can't argue against life, you can battle with propositions. Thirdly: *The most constant.* Oral teaching is at best but occasional; life teaching is perennial. Fourthly: *The most Christ-like.* Christ's teaching was life teaching; His conduct confirmed and illustrated the doctrines which His lips declared.

CONCLUSION. — Brothers, mark here the great work for us and all to do. We must *learn* the Bible, *practise* the Bible, and *preach* the Bible. The last can only be done by those who have accomplished the first and second.

A PICTURE OF BARRISTERIAL DEPRAVITY.

"And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul," &c., &c.—Acts xxiv. 1—9.*

THIS piece of history presents to us in the presence of Tertullus a picture of a corrupt barrister. The office of an advocate in judicial proceedings is one created by the wisdom and kindness of our ancestors.

* See my "Homiletical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles," *in loco*.

Many circumstances may occur to render the man accused of crime, literally incompetent to defend himself, and to clear his character. It is well, therefore, that there should be men who have the learning, the ability, and the right to take up their cause. But this office, like all other human things, has been sadly corrupted. Tertullus is an example. We see him doing two things and disgracing his profession.

I. VENALLY ADOPTING A BAD CAUSE. What brought him down to Cæsarea from Jerusalem with Ananias the High Priest and the elders? Love of right? Chivalry. No; money. He sold his services, and that to a bad cause. First: *It was the cause of the strong against the weak.* Who are his clients? The whole Jewish Sanhedrim. Who was the man against whom he was to bring all the power of his learning and his eloquence? One poor man, a tent maker. Chivalry ought to be the inspiration of an advocate, but, alas, as in the case before us, how often is it seen a degraded and mercenary thing! Secondly: *It was the cause of the wrong against the right.* Were the weak in the wrong, men of the higher type would hesitate to go with the strong against them. But here is a man who was unquestionably right, and the mighty prosecutor was manifestly wrong. In English courts of judicature scenes somewhat analogous to

this sometimes appear. There are eminent members of the bar, who are wonderfully pious in public meetings, and in their place in Parliament on Ecclesiastical questions, whose services in a bad cause can be secured by a handsome fee. We see this man—

II. WICKEDLY ADVOCATING A BAD CAUSE. In his advocacy we discover three things. First: *Base flattery.* "Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence, we accept it always, and in all places," &c. Felix, a man steeped in depravity, hated by the people—this venal advocate deifies with his flattering—ascribes to him deeds which were due to God alone. Secondly: *Flagrant falsehood.* He lays, as we have seen, three charges against him—*sedition, heresy, and sacrilege*—not one of which had the shadow of foundation in fact. Thirdly: *Suppressed truth.* The man who suppresses a truth where its declaration is demanded by the nature of the case, is guilty of falsehood—is a deceiver. This Tertullus did now. In stating his case, he said nothing concerning the "forty" which had conspired in Jerusalem, and bound themselves by a solemn oath to kill Paul. (Acts xxiii. 14, 15.)

CONCLUSION. — This Tertullus was no doubt a great man in his own esteem—was, perhaps, affluent in legal lore,

and endowed with high powers of oratory. Probably no professional advocate stood higher with the council at Jerusalem, and the law courts of his times, than he. Albeit in the case before us he has clothed himself with eternal infamy in becoming the venal advocate of the wrong against the right—the strong against the weak.

THE BURNING FIERY FURNACE—
TRUE SOULS.

“Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.”
—Dan. iii. 25.

SHADRACH, Meshach, and Abed-nego were true men. (Sketch their biography.) Here we have true souls—

I. IMMENSELY TRIED. “Walking in the midst of the fire.” The question they had to determine was, whether they should be unfaithful to their consciences, preserve their lives, and obtain the favour of the Babylonian monarch, or be true, and pass into death through the utmost agony—“a burning fiery furnace.” They chose the latter. Was there ever a greater trial than this? Thus God often tries the good. Abraham, Job, Daniel, Paul, examples. Here we have true souls—

II. MORALLY UNCONQUERABLE. Not all the influence of the monarch and his ministers could break their purpose, or

make them unfaithful to God. They defied the despot, they dared death in its most horrid form. You can’t conquer a true soul.* “It smiles at the drawn dagger, and defies the point.” Here we have true souls—

III. ESSENTIALLY UNINJURABLE. “And they have no hurt.” “Who is that will harm you if ye be followers of that which is good?” The greatest injury you can inflict upon a good man is bodily pain. And what are these? These don’t affect the soul; they often subserve its interests. “Although the figtree does not blossom,” &c. “I glory in tribulation,” &c. “Fear not him that can kill the body.” Here you have true souls—

IV. DIVINELY ACCOMPANIED. “The form of the fourth is like the Son of God.” What a sight for the monarch! Did it not rouse his conscience, think you? God always accompanies His people. “Lo, I am with you alway.”

RIGHTEOUSNESS.

“For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”—Matt. v. 20.

I. THE UNBELIEVING. They have no righteousness. It

* See “Philosophy of Happiness,” page 75.

comes of faith: "The righteousness which is of faith;" "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Faith possible and required, therefore unbelief sinful and condemning.

II. THE PHARISEES. Their righteousness before men, not before God: outward, not of the heart: self-reliant, not self-forgetful: legal, not evangelical: not justifying. It was of the publican Jesus said, "This man went down to his house justified"

III. THE BELIEVER. As to the *source* of his righteousness, it is in Christ, not of the law. "He was made sin for us who knew no sin," &c. It is therefore before God, inward, justifying.

As to the *results* of it, it will be a life and not merely a doctrine; the truth observed springing from the truth in the heart. Then it will give excellence to character, revealing itself in gratitude to God, in kindness and sympathy towards man, in freedom from the hard censures characteristic of the Pharisees who saw the mote in another's eye, not the beam in their own.

It will then *exceed*—as being spiritual; as pervading the whole nature; as preparing for the kingdom of God yonder.

It is not so important to express discontent with the righteousness of others as to have a better ourselves.

R. V. PRYCE, LL.B., M.A.

SKETCHES FROM GENESIS. (x.)

LOT'S CHOICE.

"And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly."—Gen. xiii. 10—13.

WHATEVER judgment we form of Lot's character when reading his history previous to and after this incident, it is evident that this choice manifests a worldly spirit. We say of it—

I. THAT IT WAS A CHOICE WITHOUT CONSULTING GOD. As soon as Abram gave the unanimous proposal for him to take his choice, "Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where," &c. Evidently this was a crisis in the history of Lot, and this crisis is past without thinking of his duty to ask for God's guidance. Perceiving the land well watered and fruitful, he was in great haste to choose it for himself, and thus secure earthly riches; without asking God if it was His will that he should dwell with the men of Sodom, who "were wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." Men often look upon the affairs

of the present life as if disconnected with the future ; and act the same as if religion had nothing to do with their daily avocations. Religion ought to regulate the whole man in all his actions and thoughts. The Lord Jesus taught his disciples to look up to God in reference to their temporal prosperity. "Behold the fowls of the air ; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns ; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they ?" If we believe in a wise and just Ruler of the universe, He ought to be consulted in all our doings.

II. A CHOICE WHICH DEPRIVED HIM OF A GOOD MAN'S COMPANY. True, "the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together ;" still, there is no grief manifested by Lot on account of this ; and this choice precludes the possibility of Abram's dwelling even near him. Every worldly-minded man forfeits, First : *The sympathy of good men.* The principles acted upon by the two are widely different : the one's principle is self-love ; the other's, self-sacrifice. The great object of the worldly-minded is self-happiness ; that of every good man, the glory of God ; so there cannot be any sympathy between the two. The good look with *pity* upon the man who endeavours to satisfy his soul with the things of the present life, but cannot

sympathise with him in his efforts. Secondly : *The assistance of the good.* True, that Abram engaged in war on Lot's behalf ; it was not to facilitate him in the accumulation of riches, but to save his life. The good can render no assistance to the worldly-minded as long as he is seeking self-happiness as the chief object of life.

III. A CHOICE ANTAGONISTIC TO THE GOOD MORAL TRAINING OF HIS FAMILY. He ought not to take this important step without first considering what effects living in Sodom would probably have upon the family. Moral culture ought to be of greater importance in our estimation than wealth. First : *Because it is of higher value.* Good principles are of infinitely greater value to man than a high position in society. If the scarcity of articles make them precious, I should think sound principles are of the greatest value in these days. Secondly : *Because it elevates the man.* Wealth does not always elevate the man ; the circumstances are altered, but the principles, the heart remains the same. Religion not only alters the outward character of men, but the whole being is changed ; a new creation in Christ Jesus has taken place. Thirdly : *Because its beneficial results are more certain.* Wealth is uncertain ; it proved so to Lot on more than one occasion. Once good principles enter the heart, they remain there, and their

influence will increase upon the man himself, and upon others around him.

IV. A CHOICE WHICH EXPOSED HIM TO MANY DANGERS. He and his family were once carried away captives, and at last had to escape for their lives. Besides these, he was exposed daily to moral dangers. First: *The danger of his sympathy with the good being narrowed.* Secondly: *Danger of looking upon sin in a false*

light. Witnessing scenes of wickedness and profligacy daily exposed him to the danger of losing sight of the sinfulness of sin. Thirdly: *The danger of losing his own soul.* The power of example is great, and the influence of public opinion is mighty.

CONCLUSION. One false step may lead a man to many troubles.

Uckfield.

CYMRO.

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCXXXIV.)

MATERIAL WEALTH AND INTELLIGENT SPEECH.

"There is gold, and a multitude of rubies; but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel."—Prov. xx. 15.

THERE is evidently a comparison here between material wealth and enlightened speech. "Gold" and "rubies" here represent worldly riches, and the "lips of knowledge," represent that speech "that ministereth grace unto the hearers." We offer three remarks on the comparison in the text:

I. ONE IS RARER THAN THE OTHER. This seems to be implied, for it is said, "There is gold and *multitude* of rubies." In the days of Solomon there seemed to be plenty of material wealth, for we read in 1 Kings

x. 27, that "the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycamore trees that are in the vale for abundance." And wealth is pretty abundant here in England. But intelligent speech is rare. Where wealth counts its thousands, wisdom can only count its tens. "Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the way of understanding?" &c.

II. ONE IS MORE INTRINSICALLY VALUABLE THAN THE OTHER. There is no more intrinsic worth in "gold" and "rubies" than in brass and stones, they are valuable only on account of their scarcity. But in wise words of truth and soberness, there is an intrinsic value. They are the embodiments and the vehicles of those treasures that enrich immortal

spirits, that are appreciated by God, and that are counted valuable by all holy minds in all times. They are indeed "a precious jewel." Their lustre no time can dim, their worth no change can deteriorate.

III. ONE IS MORE SERVICE-ABLE THAN THE OTHER. "Gold" and "rubies" can only serve men temporally and for a short time. Wise words will serve men for ever. What thousands have felt the value of such words. "Such was the delight of hanging upon the lips of the golden-mouthed Chrysostom, that the common proverb was—'Rather let the sun not shine than Chrysostom not preach.'" Such words convert, purify, ennoble, and save men. The "lips of knowledge" are the organs through which God pours the highest blessings of his grace.

CONCLUSION. Value spiritual wisdom as the great thing. "It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. The gold and the crystal cannot equal it, and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls, for the price of wisdom is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold."—Job xxviii. 12—19.

(No. CCXXXV.)

BUSINESS ECONOMICS.

"Take his garment that is surety for a stranger; and take a pledge of him for a strange woman. Bread of

deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel. Every purpose is established by counsel; and with good advice make war."—Prov. xx. 16—18.

"An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed."—Prov. xx. 21.

THE book of Solomon deserves, and will repay, the study of all young men who intend to embark, or have embarked, in mercantile pursuits. It abounds with those maxims which will stimulate diligence, insure integrity, and promote success. The author of the book was not only an ethical philosopher, but a shrewd man of business. He not only understood the moral laws that should rule men in all their intercourse with each other, but also the necessary conditions of real success in all business undertakings. In the verses before us there are no less than four maxims for business expressed with more or less clearness and force.

I. CAUTION IN CREDIT. "Take his garment that is surety for a stranger." The question of suretiship has engaged our attention several times already.* The man here sketched is *recklessly imprudent* and *morally profligate*. He becomes "surety for a stranger," and is addicted to vicious indulgences. Such a man is not to be trusted in business without the strongest security. "Take his garment." Under the Jewish law the garment was the very last thing which was to be taken in pledge, and could not be retained beyond the passing day. (Exod. xxii.

* See our articles in HOMELIST on Prov. vi. 1, 2; xi. 15; xvii. 18.

26, 27.) The advice of Solomon amounts to this: Have nothing to do with such men in business; don't give credit to the reckless and the profligate; see that men are trustworthy in character and in means before you trust them. Half the failures in business, perhaps, arise from trusting such men.

II. HONESTY IN DEALING. "Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel." The fact implies, First: *That property may be obtained by fraud.* How much worldly wealth is acquired every day in the world by cozenage and deceit? Fraud is, perhaps, the most active architect in the building of fortunes. Secondly: *That property so obtained may for a time be very pleasant.* It "is sweet to a man." Public opinion gives its owner credit for industry and skill, and knows nothing, for a time, of his fraudulent measures. Conscience, too, sleeps in the lap of luxury, and whatever can minister pleasure to appetite, taste, vanity, or ambition stands at his side and awaits his bidding. He feels it "is sweet." Thirdly: *That the pleasure attending such property must end in suffering.* "Afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel." What more emphatical expression of chagrin and bitter disappointment than the idea of a hungry man putting in his mouth with an eager hand the bread that should relieve his appetite, and finding it turn to sand and to gravelly stone? What examples have we here in England, recorded in almost every day's journals, of fortunes once

sweet turning to gall, bread once sweet becoming gravel? Convicted swindlers feel it so. It was so with Achan and his wedge of gold; with Gehazi and his talents of silver, with Judas and his thirty pieces of silver,—with all, the "bread" once "sweet" became "gravel."

III. DELIBERATION IN EMBARKING. "Every purpose is established by counsel, and with good advice make war." "With good advice make war!" Then we think war would seldom be made, if at all. "Good advice" must be advice in harmony with Divine law, and those laws are dead against wars:

"War is a game which, were their subjects wise,
Kings should not play at."

The general idea of the passage is this: Well consider every undertaking before you embark in it. Two convictions should be reached before you start on an enterprise. First: *Whether the enterprise in itself is lawful.* Is it a right thing? There are sinful enterprises. The manufacture and the sale of intoxicating drinks, the publication and sale of immoral and worthless literature, and military life in all its departments. Men who take true "counsel" will never embark in such enterprises as these. Secondly: *Whether the means to be employed are good.* By good, we mean in harmony with rectitude and adapted to the end. Christ Himself urges this deliberation before embarking in our undertakings. "What king going to make war against another king sitteth not down," &c. (Luke xiv. 31.)

IV. TEMPERATENESS IN

ACCUMULATING. "An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning, but the end thereof shall not be blessed." Solomon does not mean by this that all the property that comes suddenly to a man is necessarily unblessed. A poor man may by legacy or lineage come into possession of lordly "inheritance" in a single day: in this he would be fortunate and not criminal, and if he used it rightly it would be a blessing to him in the end and for ever. Nor does he mean that a man who through a signally wise and assiduously diligent application of means to ends, and in all with strict honesty and devout spirit, accumulates wealth speedily, is not blessed in his possessions. He points, undoubtedly, to the man who with a voracious greed for wealth, seizes every opportunity to attain it regardless of truth, honour, and justice, and thus becomes rich in a short time. Our country abounds with instances of men who in this way bound from poverty to opulence in a few days.* But the end is not "blessed." Anything but blessed. Discovery comes and clothes them with infamy; conscience is roused and torments them. The curses of the defrauded and the frowns of the Almighty are over them.

CONCLUSION. Young men ponder well these maxims which all your business undertakings require. Caution in credit, honesty in dealing, deliberation in embarking and temperateness in accumulating.

* See the reports of the "Albert Life Insurance," which now fill our daily journals.

(No. CCXXXVI.)

THE IDLE TALEBEARER AND
THE WICKED SON.

"He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets; therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips. Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness."—Prov. xx. 19, 20.

EACH of these verses present a bad character—the mischievous tattler and the unnatural child. Solomon has referred to them more than once before, and never does he point to them without an indignant scorn.

I. THE IDLE TALEBEARER. A talebearer is one who "officiously tells tales: one who impertinently communicates intelligence or anecdotes, and makes mischief in society by his officiousness." We gather from Solomon's description here, First: *That he is insidious.* He gets hold of the secrets of men. By his soft words and bland manners he ingratiates himself in the confidence of the unsuspecting, and gets hold of such things connected with their experience which they would not on any account make public. All men have some secrets. Things which they will not willingly allow to fall from their own lips, still less from the lips of others: still at times they are tempted to entrust them to those in whom they have confidence; the talebearer gets hold of them. Secondly: *He is treacherous.* He "revealeth secrets." Sometimes he may do it wantonly, for the mere love of gossip; sometimes from vanity, to show what confidence men repose in him; sometimes maliciously, in order to disturb old friendships, to create social broils. In any

case, he is a traitor. He has betrayed those who trusted to him that which they regarded as amongst the sacred things of their experience. Thirdly: *He is fawning.* He "flattereth with his lips." Those to whom he betrays the secrets, he flatters; he gives them to understand that he will tell no one else, that were it not for their intelligence and integrity, he could not make to them such communications. He is a base, fawning parasite. Fourthly: *He is dangerous.* "Meddle not with him." The man that will flatter you, vilify the absent, betray the secrets of others, is to be shunned. Have nothing to do with him. He goeth about from family to family, from circle to circle, retailing his secrets, making his comments, insidiously striking at reputations, creating wounds, and leaving them to rankle in the hearts of men. His mouth is a lethal weapon, with which he murders the good names of men. "Meddle not with him." Dean Swift has well described such tale-bearers:

"Nor do they trust their tongues
alone,
But speak a language of their own:
Can read a nod, a shrug, a look,
Far better than a printed book;
Convey a libel in a frown,
And wink a reputation down;
Or by the tosseing of a fan
Describe the lady and the man."

II. THE WICKED SON. "Whoso curseth his father or mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness." First: *Here is a horrible crime.* To curse is to imprecate evil on any one. How appalling the crime of cursing father or mother, the instrumental authors of our being, the tender preservers of our infancy and childhood, and the loving

guardians of our youth, and such monsters are to be found. The law of Moses required that such children should be put to death. (Exod. xx. 17; Lev. xx. 9). Secondly: *Here is a terrible doom.* "His lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness." The lamp is often used as a figure of prosperity. (Prov. xiii. 9; Job xviii. 16.) Such a wicked child shall not prosper. The law of the moral universe prevent his success. "His lamp shall be put out." He shall be wrapped in the darkness of poverty, disappointment, and remorse.

(No. CCXXXVII.)

THE DUTY OF MAN UNDER A
SENSE OF INJURIES.

"Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee."—Prov. xx. 22.

THE text suggests two remarks at the outset. First: *That men in passing through this life are subject to injuries from their fellow men.* Through sin men, instead of being the loving brothers of each other, are become to an awful extent the deceivers, the plunderers, the oppressors, and the devils. Hence men are everywhere found groaning under the injuries they have received from others. Secondly: *That men under a sense of injury crave for the punishment of their enemies.* There is a sense of justice placed in every human soul: injuries kindle the sense of justice into a fiery passion, and this passion is revenge, and this revenge cries for the destruction of the enemy. "Revenge," says Bacon, "is wild justice." Yes, it is justice maddened into fury.

Few passions get such power over men as revenge: it is often implacable.

"I'll have my bond: I will not hear thee speak:

I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.

I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,

To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield

To Christian intercessors."

SHAKESPEARE.

Now the Bible legislates for man under a sense of injuries. The text requires him to do two things.

I. CEASE FROM THE WORK OF AVENGING HIMSELF. "Say not then I will recompense evil." There is a great temptation under the injury to "say" so, a great temptation to grasp the iron rod of retribution and pursue the offender even unto death, but this must not be done. There are several good reasons for this. First: *The injured man is disqualified for the infliction of just punishment.* He is himself a criminal, living under the bane of eternal justice, and his own sense of rectitude is perverted. He has therefore neither the right nor the capacity to deal out retribution to any one. Has a criminal a right to the seat of the judge?

"Use every man after his deserts, and who shall 'escape whipping?

SHAKESPEARE.

Every man would be engaged in whipping his brother, and the world would become a pandemonium reeking with blood. Secondly: *The punishment he inflicts is an injury to himself.* "Revenge is sweet," it is said; but if there is a gratification in it, it is only momentary. When the final stroke has been given, the season of reflec-

tion sets in, and conscience comes up and makes the avenger its own victim. Thirdly: *The Bible prohibits the attempt.* It is prohibited even in the Old Testament, Exod. xxiii. 4, 5; Lev. xviii. 19; Prov. xviii. 13; xxiv. 29. The New Testament abounds with interdicts. Matt. v. 36, 45; Rom. xii. 17, 21. The text requires him to

II. COMMIT THE AVENGEMENT TO GOD. "Wait on the Lord and he shall save thee." Is my enemy to be allowed to perpetrate his enormities on me with impunity? No, he will be punished; punished far more effectively than I can do if I leave it in the hands of Him who judgeth righteously. He is omniscient. We know but imperfectly. He is without passions. We are blinded by selfishness. He is without partiality. We are prejudiced on our own sides. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." He will avenge us of our enemies.

First: *By the dispensations of His providence.* Secondly: *By the compunctions of conscience.* Thirdly: *By making the injuries we have received spiritually useful to ourselves.*

CONCLUSION. "See that none render evil for evil unto any man: but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men." (1 Thess. v. 15.) "Recompense to no man evil for evil. . . . Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves: but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." (Rom. xii. 19, 21.) "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him

in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator." (1 Peter iv. 16.) "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. The

Lord shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked and save them, because they trust in Him. (Ps. xxxvii. 5, 40.)

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RACE. HISTORY has transmitted to us but little accurate knowledge of the aboriginal inhabitants of the various countries of Europe. Their tribes doubtless differed from each other in language, character, and customs, as much as did the North American Indians when that continent was first discovered and settled by our ancestors. They evidently occupied the same scale of moral and intellectual being; they were equally pagan and benighted, and equally unable to compete in vitality with the more vigorous races that subdued them. Most of them have shared the same fate with the aborigines of America. They have been extinguished or absorbed, until few vestiges of their distinctive existence remain. The populations that supplanted or succeeded them present a long list in history; but they may all be generalised in two grand divisions, one of which we will call the Latin, the other the Teutonic race. On the character and combination of these two races hangs the progress of civilisation, science, liberty, and all the great temporal interests of mankind. No two contiguous portions of the human family

ever differed more widely in character and career. The Latins made Rome the boasted metropolis and mistress of the world. Its gates and temples were hung from year to year with the fresh trophies of their victorious arms. Their terrible legions trod down the effeminate and demoralised nationalities of Asia and Africa, and the rude Celtic tribes of Western Europe. But there was one race they never could subdue—a light-haired, blue-eyed race that peopled Central and Northern Europe to the frigid zone; a race whose rude energy of character and will a century's struggle with the vaunted conquerors of the world could not bend nor tame; a race whose rugged virtues no temptations could seduce or undermine, whose moral nerve and sinew grew stronger by endurance, as Rome grew weaker by every disease of internal corruption; a race which had no written language when Cicero was in his glory, which had no capital or centre of population equal to a three-year old American village when its allied tribes smote the Roman legions in the forests of Germany, or when the Eternal City tottered to its fall before the uncivilised hordes of Northern

Europe; a race which to this day never has had a Rome, nor a Paris, nor a St. Petersburg, which has no distinctive capital now, neither in Vienna, nor Berlin, nor Frankfort, nor Hamburg, nor in Copenhagen, nor Stockholm. This remarkable race, with its German, Dutch, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, and Icelandic families, we call the Teutonic. What this element has done, and is yet to do, in the mental and political career and character of modern nations, is not left to fanciful deduction, but is established in the capital facts of their history. When Rome fell, the Latin race possessed nearly all the elements of Christianity and civilisation in Europe. The Germans or Teutons were still pagan, wandering tribes, with no science, literature, nor even a written language. The log or leaf cabins of Germany, compared with the magnificent architecture and sculpture of Italy, would seem to measure the intellectual difference between them. But as the humble fishermen of Galilee were chosen the apostles of Christianity to the world, so were the rude hunters of German forests honoured by Providence with a mission of kindred dignity in the development of Christianised civilisation. From that time to the present moment the Divine hand and will may be most strikingly seen in combining the Teutonic and Latin races to form a people that shall cover the globe, and carry forward universal humanity to the acme of its earthly destiny. Although the union of these two races is to be the grandest result of the law of combination in the history of mankind—although it is to remould the moral and political

condition of the world, and to affect intensely and for ever the character and relationships of the earth's populations—still not one statesman, not one political philosopher in a hundred has kept his eye on the process, or measured the consequences of its consummation.—*Elihu Burritt.*

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF PLANTS.

THE life of the majority of flowering plants is not really comparable to that of at least the higher animals. Hence they cannot be said to die in exactly the same sense that animals die. A tree consists of a number of portions, each of which is supplied with all the necessary elements of an individual plant, except roots. While preserving its connection with the parent plant, roots are not required, though they can be developed when necessary, as in layering, when the plant's nourishment is partly curtailed by cutting the shoot half through. The simplest form of flowering plant is the equivalent of a single part of the more compound plants, and consists of a simple axis which increases in length by the gradual unfolding of a terminal bud. When this terminal bud produces blossoms instead of leaves, the further growth of the axis is arrested, and the plant dies, unless new buds are developed from the axils of the leaves below. If these buds become detached, they reproduce the arrangement of the original plant; if they remain attached to the axis, a compound plant is produced. The buds of such a plant really correspond more truly than their aggregate does

to the individual animal organism. Their interdependence is small, and their relation is one of growth, morphological, and not physiological, like that of the different organs of an individual animal. They possess frequently great individuality of character, as when a particular bud of a plant sports away from the parental type conformed to by the rest. Instances of this bud variation are common. A good example is the production of nectarines occasionally by peach trees (Darwin's *Animals and Plants under Domestication*, i. p. 341). They are capable of independent existence, which is not the case with a separate organ. A bud of one plant can be established on the nourishing tissues of another, and a shoot may, by putting out roots after detachment from the parent plant, perfectly reproduce its like. The connecting cellular tissues between the buds of plants play the part of roots. The growing parts may, however, also gain part of their food independently, as they do by the development of aerial roots in the banyan. In the screw-pine (*Pandanus*) the base of the stem and the old roots ultimately decay, and the plant is entirely maintained by the new roots, which continually sprout out higher and higher from the living structures of the stem. A compound plant like a tree may be regarded, therefore, as made up of individual parts, capable under particular conditions of

independent existence, but whose individuality is ordinarily to a great extent merged in the aggregate individuality of the whole plant. The organs of vegetables are transitory; hence life implies in vegetables continual growth. In annuals, biennials, and plants like the American aloe, and talipot, the inflorescence eventually arrests the growth of the primary axis; and exhaustion prevents the development of buds producing secondary axes. Flowering in these cases terminates the existence of the plant. In perennials and trees the axis is the only permanent structure; and while the production of leaf-buds cannot be continued without the axis supplying the necessary nutriment, the axis cannot obtain the nutriment without the due development of leaves. Hence the death of a tree may be caused either by the destruction of the axis, or by some cause checking the production of leaves. The process of death in trees is, however, usually slow; even if they are violently uprooted by a storm, a portion of the trunk will often contain sufficient sap to start the dormant buds the year following; but having no connection with the ground, these buds are short-lived. It is, however, evident that, apart from accidental causes, the growth of a tree may be unlimited, and the number of known instances in which a great age has been attained is considerable.—*W. Johnson, M.A.*



Notes on New Books.

BY A BARRISTER.

A PROFOUND book which contains Professor Francis William Newman's views on many subjects, and particularly on Criticism, Logic, and History, is issued by Messrs. Trübner, and entitled *Miscellanies; chiefly Addresses, Academical and Historical*.

Mr. Bentley issues the eighth volume of *The Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*." It is written by Dr. Hock, Dean of Chichester, and is the life of Cardinal Pole.

In two interesting volumes (Bentley), we have "*The Life of Admiral Lord Cochrane, Earl of Dundonald*," by his son, the eleventh earl.

Messrs. Longmans publish for the Rev. George Bartle, D.D., "*The Scriptural Doctrine of Hades*," a work which comprises an inquiry into the state of the righteous and wicked dead, between death and the general judgment, and attempts to demonstrate from the Bible that the atonement was neither made on the cross nor yet in this world.

Mr. Thomas Doubleday, publishes at Messrs. Smith and Elder's, *The True Law of Population shown to be connected with the Food of the People*.

Some spirited and able Essays have been written by Mrs. Lynn Linton. They are published by Messrs. Routledge in one volume, which is entitled *Ourselves: Essays on Women*.

A good and curious collection of anecdotes and old legends, illustrating all phases of human life and character, will be found in *Curiosities in Olden Times* (London: Hayes), by Mr. S. Baring-Gould, M.A.

Mr. Carew Hazlitt supplies an excellent collection of *English Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases* (J. R. Smith). They are collected from the most authentic sources, and alphabetically arranged and annotated.

The probabilities of a railway route of 5,000 miles to India, a route whereby Calcutta will, in point of time, be reached as easily from London as Edinburgh was a century ago, are discussed in an able book by Professor Thomas Chenery, M.A., B.A.L.; being *Suggestions for a Railway Route to India*. (R. Hardwicke.)

The History of Ireland from the Earliest Period to the Emancipation of the Catholics, by the late Thomas D'Arcy M'Gee, B.C.L., is published in two volumes by Messrs Cameron and Ferguson.

Mr. Walter Dickson gives us a useful work on *Japan*. (Blackwood and Sons.) It is a sketch of the History, Government, and Officers of the Empire.

Ten Thousand Miles of Travel, Sport, and Adventure, is an illustrated 8vo. volume by Captain Townshend, published by Messrs. Hurst and Blackett.

The numerous communities of Jews which exist in Abyssinia, are made the subject of an interesting work by Mr. J. M. Flad, entitled *The Fulashas (Jews) of Abyssinia*. (Macintosh.)

A most tragic narrative of his personal experience amongst the Paraguayans has been written by Mr. George Fred. Masterman. Messrs. Low and Co. are the publishers, and it is designated *Seven Eventful Years in Paraguay*.

B. A. L.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

EMBLEMS: A Bird's-Eye View of the Harmonies of Nature with Mankind.

By LEO HARTLEY GRINDON. London: F. Pitman, 20, Paternoster Row, E.C.

"THOUGH formally," says the Author, "published only now, this little essay was written more than twenty years ago, and in part offered for perusal through the medium of a magazine. Condensed and corrected, and with a few new paragraphs introduced, where there seemed to be occasion, it is now submitted to a wider circle, in the hope of suggesting further inquiry into the beautiful subjects of which it treats. That it should be either 'scientific' or 'metaphysical,' has been no part of the writer's design or ambition either. The idea has been simply to string together a few illustrations of the harmonies which exist between man and the world he lives in, and to provide an hour of useful reading for the amiable and the thoughtful." The book is made up of nine chapters, the contents of which are, "I. What Emblems are; II. Illustrations from Geology; III. Illustrations from Plants and Flowers; IV. Illustrations from Plants and Flowers, continued; V. Illustrations from Plants and Flowers, concluded; VI. Illustrations from Inanimate Nature; VII. Illustrations from Inanimate Nature, continued; VIII. Illustrations from the Seasons; IX. The Omnipresent God." It will be seen that this little work contains things of rare excellence, and these things we may add are presented with that clearness of expression and reverence of spirit which characterize all the productions of Mr. Grindon.

SABBATH MELODIES FOR THE FAMILY CIRCLE. By Dr. H. S. LESLIE.
London: F. Pitman, 20, Paternoster Row.

"THESE poetic gems," says the author, "are set to music for family use. Simplicity in melody and harmony has been the chief aim of the com-

poser: the former that all the members of a family may sing, and the latter, that a mere child may accompany on the pianoforte or harmonium. Should they assist in making the hearts of God's people joyful and happy on His most holy day, or add fresh pleasure and enjoyment to the family circle, the composer will feel thankful that his time and labour have not been in vain." Some of the melodies are exceedingly sweet. In fact as a whole we prefer the music to the hymns to which they are set. Some of the hymns seem to assume that this world is a world to be grumbled at as entirely unworthy of man's existence, and that the great end of man's being is to struggle to get away into some other region more worthy of his supposed greatness, and more gratifying to his selfishness and ambition.

THE CHARACTERS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. By the Rev. ISAAC WILLIAMS, B.D. Rivingtons, London, Oxford, and Cambridge.

God reveals Himself to man through man. There is obvious wisdom and kindness in this. Divine truth in stars and seas, stones and shrubs, plants and animals, is interesting to every honest student, but divine truth when coming through man is for many reasons more attractive and influential. Hence the Bible is made up to a great extent of human biographies, and has an imperishable interest for man everywhere and at all times. Some of the lives that it sketches are all but utterly corrupt: some are a mixture of good and evil. There is but one perfect. What is bad is recorded as beacons to warn, what is good as virtues to imitate. Every man who gives an honest sketch of the men whose biographies are given with more or less fulness in the Bible, performs a service of unquestionable usefulness. Such a service in sacred literature has often been rendered with more or less ability by different men in different Churches, and at different times. The work before us is one of the best of this class. It is faithful in its representations of character, thoughtful in its reflections, and devout in its spirit, and practical in its purpose.

THE MAN OF SORROWS: and His Relationships. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

"THE first part of this little book," says the author, "is intended to exhibit prominently the peculiar phase of our Saviour's earthly existence, and its causes, which contemplation leads the mind almost of necessity to the question attempted to be disposed of by the second part. The book does not profess to be scholarly or exhaustive, but meditative and suggestive; and in seeking to ascertain the belief of primitive Christians, or perhaps more properly in the result, it will possibly conflict somewhat with dogmatic theology." Though we cannot endorse all the author's conclusions, we can recommend his little work on the ground of its thoughtfulness, candour, and catholicity.




A HOMILY

ON

Christ and the Human Race.

“As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.”—John xvii. 2, 3.

S these words now stand before us the idea is, That the Eternal Father gave to our Lord a certain number of men to whom He was to give eternal life, and to none besides. “Here,” says a popular expositor, pointing to this text, “is the Father making over the elect to the Redeemer, and giving them to Him as His charge and trust; as the crown and recompense of his undertaking. He has a sovereign power over all the fallen race, but a peculiar interest in the chosen remnant. And here is the Son undertaking to secure the happiness of those that were given Him, that He would give eternal life to them.” Is this the idea contained in the original Greek? If so, we are bound to accept it. The idea of the Infinite Father acting on the principle of favouritism, and handing over a certain number of His children to Christ to be saved, leaving the others to be damned, may be revolting at once to our in-

tellectual conceptions and our moral instincts. What of that? Am I a judge of the Infinite? Can I span immensity? "Who am I that I should reply against God?" Is it contained in God's *real* Word? If so, I accept it though it confounds my judgments and strikes hard against my intuitions.

Whether such an idea as this is contained in other parts of the Scriptures is a question on which I have not to enter now. It may be so, though, to say the least, I doubt it. But that it is contained in the original of our text, I venture, with all humility, to deny. I submit the following translation of Dean Alford, as more faithful than that of our version: *According as thou gavest Him power over all flesh that whatsoever thou hast given Him to them He should give eternal life.* The idea seems to be this,—Inasmuch as thou gavest Him authority over all mankind, that He should give to all mankind what thou hast given Him, eternal life.*

Taking this as the idea contained in the text, we have then several glorious truths brought under our notice.

I. That Christ is THE MASTER of the human race. He has "power over all flesh." The word *ἐξουσία*, here translated power, is rendered authority in about thirty other places in the New Testament, and this is undoubtedly its meaning here. The word flesh, *σαρκός*, which in the Bible sometimes means all animal existence—sometimes a constituent part of the human body, sometimes moral corruption, and sometimes spiritual sensibility, here unquestionably means human nature, as in Luke iii. 6, "All flesh shall see the salvation of God." The text, therefore, asserts that Christ has authority over all humanity, that He is in fact the Master of the human race. This is taught elsewhere in the New Testament, taught with great clearness, force, and frequency too. We are told that when He ascended from the

* Καθὼς ἔδωκας αὐτῷ ἐξουσίαν πᾶσης σαρκὸς ἵνα πᾶν ὃ δέδωκας αὐτῷ δώσῃ αὐ τοῖς ζῶντι αἰῶνι.

grave, He said unto his disciples, "All power is given to me in heaven and on earth." It is said that he is gone into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, and angels and authority are made subject to Him. And we are also informed that He "hath on His vesture and His thigh a name written King of kings and Lord of lords."

Now, as Master of the race, several things are noteworthy, His power over all is *absolute*. His authority is more than legislative and judicial. It extends to life itself. He kills and He makes alive. He has "the keys of death and of hell at his girdle." None come into existence but by His bidding, none continue an instant longer than He wills, and not one departs without His permission. As Master, He is infinitely *independent* of all. He is not on the throne by the suffrage of any. Did men wish Him there? Not they. They struggled hard to confine Him in the dark chambers of mortality. Their cry was, and is, "We will not have this man to rule over us." They neither placed Him there, nor can they depose Him. He is sublimely independent. The "heathen may rage, the people may imagine a vain thing, the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision." As Master He *interferes not with the freedom of any*. Absolute as is His power over them, He exerts no coercion. Each of the millions is left free—free to obey and free to rebel. He allows conquerors to deluge continents with blood, and proud ecclesiastics to sit in the place of God. Each is *conscious* of his freedom. As Master of the race, He does not value service by its *amount*, but by its *motive*. Men look at the measure rather than the motive in service, not so with Him. The cup of cold water and the widow's mite to Him are more valuable than cathedrals reared for his

worship, or lordly inheritances bequeathed to carry on His cause. As Master, moreover, He has no *misgiving about the results*. He is sitting down "expecting His enemies to be made His footstool." He has established an agency on earth to work out His mediatorial purposes. He has no fear of failure. He can afford to wait. He has plenty of time. He cannot be disappointed. As He sees the golden autumn creeping through the tempests, snows, and desolation of winter, so, amidst the wreck of kingdoms, the desolations of war, the opposition of infidels, and the revolution of ages, He sees the millennium coming on.

II. That Christ is the Master of the human race by DIVINE APPOINTMENT. "As *thou* hast given power over all flesh,"—over *all* mankind. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands." "God hath highly exalted Him." "Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet." "Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," &c. Thus He reigns by *Divine right*. The Divine right of human kings is an impious fiction, a fiction which for ages has licensed the most ruthless tyrannies, and entailed the most terrible calamities upon the nations of the earth. In the march of general intelligence this fiction is rapidly losing its power, and will, thank God, very soon be buried with the blasphemous absurdities of the dark ages. That Christ reigns by Divine right is, however, no fiction. It is a glorious truth, "God hath highly exalted Him."

He being our rightful Master, *we should obey Him*. "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well: for so I am." "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" "Whoso honoureth the Son, honoureth the Father." "Kiss the Son lest He be angry." Our Governments should be moulded by His laws. Our Creeds should be founded on His teaching. Our business should be regulated by His principles. Our lives actuated in all by His Spirit. One is our Master even Christ. He being

our rightful Master, we should *rejoice in the government under which we live*. It is not only All-wise, All-just, and All-powerful but All-loving. Blessed be the great Father for making Christ the Master of my race. He might have put the world under the government of some Satanic being, who would have gratified his malign nature by rendering our existence a torture, and turning the world into a pandemonium. Or, He might have placed us under an inexorable Nemesis, who would have pursued us with the red-hot rod of punishment, and compelled us every instant to eat of the bitter fruits of our own doings. But He has placed over us One who wears our nature—One whose love for us is unconquerable, stronger than death itself—One who died for us on the cross and now lives on the throne and works through the universe in order to bless us with the felicities of His Father and Himself.

III. That Christ is the Divinely appointed Master of the human race IN ORDER TO MAKE IT HAPPY. "That He should give eternal life." Eternal life is the great boon which Christ gives to the world. This is stated with great frequency and explicitness in the New Testament. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." "Whosoever believeth on Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." "Thou hast the words of eternal life." "He that receiveth my word shall have everlasting life." Jesus said to Martha when her brother Lazarus was in the tomb, "Thy brother shall rise again. She replied, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus answered, He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

But what is this Eternal Life? Is it merely *endless* existence? This humanity might have had, had He never interposed, and this is not necessarily a blessing. It might be a curse, a curse even worse than annihilation itself. The germ of this eternal life is *eternal goodness*. Goodness is essentially eternal. Finite existence is not so. Finite existence

every moment depends upon His will. God can blot out of being in an instant the strongest of His spiritual creatures. To talk of the *essential* immortality of creatures is a contradiction in true philosophy. But can He annihilate goodness? Never. It is the soul of Himself. Goodness is the true immortal life of souls. "The incorruptible seed"—the perennial river of life. The unfading crown. The immortality of the soul consists *not* in its constitution, but in its character. The divine elements of rectitude, love, truth, godliness, in these are eternal life. Alas, the converse of this is true. What is death? *Sin* is death. Unholiness is soul-mortality. The spirit in which moral evil dwells and works dies—dies to all that gives worth and bearableness to existence—dies to God and all the blessings of his happy universe. Christ, then, is made the Master of the race, in order to make the race happy. "I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly." Glorious truth!

CONCLUSION—First: This subject furnishes a ground for the *highest gratitude*. Who would have wondered had He been enthroned to wreak vengeance upon the world, and to have rendered human existence an intolerable curse? But not so, He is made Master to hush all the discords, remove all the diseases and crush all the evils of the world. He is on the throne in order to wipe away all tears from all faces, and to make the world happy, with the happiness of God Himself. "He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new."—A new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Love, amazing love, is this.

Secondly: This subject furnishes ground for the *sublimest catholicity*. He does not work to bless any mere section of humanity, but to bless the race. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." The sphere of His redemptive mercy is co-extensive with His dominion; and His dominion is over all man-

kind. Christ is the Saviour of *all* men :—"The light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Bigot, cease to look upon all outside thy little sect as the reprobate of God, and cease to exult in the vain and impious thought that thou art a special favourite of Heaven. Thy miserable exclusiveness is a decisive proof that thou art a moral anomaly in the empire of Christ. Christ is for the race, and if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His.

Thirdly : This subject presents a ground for the *strongest confidence*. Let us rejoice in the authority of Christ. The race for whom in love He died is now under His control. His love for it now on the throne is as strong as when He bled for it on the Cross. He is using His vast authority for its restoration, and it is getting better and brighter. Its moral agriculture is improving. A layer of loam is being spread over the world in which the old weeds and thistles wither and die, and new plants of heavenlier climates are springing up in every direction. Governments, religious institutions, and customs, that once grew here luxuriantly, are losing their root-hold, and are rotting away. Every plant which His heavenly Father hath not planted He is plucking up. Its moral atmosphere is becoming more salubrious, the lungs of conscience breathe freer, old diseases are gradually disappearing, and souls are getting stronger in resolve and deed. Its moral firmament is growing more luminous, new lights break through the clouds, new constellations rise on the horizon, and fresh rays come down from the sky of thought upon regions where mental midnight has long prevailed. Thus, under the masterhood of Jesus, humanity is advancing. To us, the impatient children of a day, the progress may appear slow. But time to Him is nothing, and He has a far higher estimate of moral achievements than we have. The conversion of one soul is not much to us ; but to Him it is a stupendous event, producing a thrill of rapture through His holy universe. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over *one* sinner that repenteth."

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

OUR PURPOSE.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this TEHILIM, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character, and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) ANNOTATIONS of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The ARGUMENT of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The HOMILETICS of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately educed, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

SUBJECT: *God's Two Great Preachers to Mankind—Nature and the Bible.*

“The heavens declare the glory of God:
And the firmament sheweth his handywork.
Day unto day uttereth speech,
And night unto night sheweth knowledge.
There is no speech nor language
Where their voice is not heard.
Their line is gone out through all the earth,
And their words to the end of the world.
In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun;
Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
And rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.
His going forth is from the end of the heaven,
And his circuit unto the ends of it:
And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.
The law of the Lord is perfect,
Converting the soul:
The testimony of the Lord is sure,
Making wise the simple:

The statutes of the Lord are right,
 Rejoicing the heart :
 The commandment of the Lord is pure,
 Enlightening the eyes :
 The fear of the lord is clean,
 Enduring for ever :
 The judgments of the Lord are true
 And righteous altogether.
 More to be desired are they than gold
 Yea, than much fine gold ;
 Sweeter also than honey,
 And the honey-comb.
 Moreover, by them is thy servant warned :
 And in keeping of them there is great reward.
 Who can understand his errors ?
 Cleanse thou me from secret faults.
 Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins ;
 Let them not have dominion over me :
 Then shall I be upright,
 And I shall be innocent from the great transgression.
 Let the words of my mouth,
 And the meditation of my heart,
 Be acceptable in thy sight,
 O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.”—(Psa. xix.)

HISTORY.—This grand poem is called a Psalm of David, and there is every reason to believe that he is the author. It breathes his spirit, it bears the marks of his great soul. As it makes no reference to any particular place, engagement, or event, it is not possible to ascertain with certainty the occasion of its composition. Some have supposed that he wrote it during the period of his shepherd life—a period when his youthful spirit was peculiarly alive to nature in its grandest aspects, and when abroad in the quiet fields he had most favourable opportunities for observing the splendour, and studying the movements of the heavenly bodies.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 1.*—“*The heavens declare the glory of God.*” “The heavens” here mean the same as “*firmament*” in the next clause. They represent that immeasurable expanse above us in which the clouds voyage, and the heavenly bodies perform their wondrous revolutions. The boundless sea of blue air in which suns and systems sail away into immensity. The “glory of God” is the totality of his perfections, his infinite excellence. “*The firmament showeth his handywork.*” “Handywork” means

hand work. It means here his skilful productions. Alexander's translation of this verse is, "The heavens are telling the glory of God, and the work of his hands is the firmament declaring." The participles are expressive of continued action.

Ver. 2.—"*Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.*" "Day unto day" means from one day to another, uninterrupted succession; and the idea of the passage is that the testimony of nature to the glory and handywork of God is perpetual and incessant.

Ver. 3.—"*There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.*" In the margin the last clause is "without the voice heard," or without these their voice is heard. The verse means one of two things, each of which is true, either that there is no people, whatever their language, to whom the heavens do not speak, or, that without any speech or language the heavens testify of God to all men.

Ver. 4.—"*Their line is gone out through all the earth.*" The word "line" means measuring line (Jer. xxxi. 39), and the idea is that the audience addressed by these heavens is co-extensive with the earth. "*And their words to the end of the world.*" A repetition of the same idea, "*In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun.*" "In them." What? The heavens. In that immeasurable firmament he has set a tabernacle for the sun; he has pitched a tent for the great orb of day. The sun has a tent or dwelling place, and that dwelling place is the heavens. Hence we read that "the sun and moon stood still in their habitation." (Hab. iii. 2.)

Ver. 5.—"*Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.*" The second simile here has reference to the sun's daily course, the first to his vigorous and cheerful reappearance after the darkness of the night. By a fine transition, the general idea of a tent or dwelling is here exchanged for the specific one of a nuptial couch or chamber. "Rejoiceth," literally, "will rejoice for ever as he now does."

Ver. 6.—"*His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it.*" At night the sun seems to pitch his tent in the heavens, at the end of the world—the Western horizon, and in the morning he comes up from the East with the joyousness of a bridegroom, and the strength of a giant, to run again his majestic course. "*And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.*" It is not said there is nothing hid from the light thereof; for there are many places where the sun's rays do not penetrate—impenetrable darkness reigns in many parts of the earth. Had the writer said there is nothing hid from the light thereof, it would

be untrue to fact, but it is not untrue to fact that there is nothing hid from its *heat*. The phraseology, therefore, is scientifically accurate. Science tells us that all the work done on the earth is by solar heat. The seed buried in the earth is hid from the light, but not from the heat. Heat is the quickener of all life, the spirit of all motion. Heat sleeps in all the minerals of the earth. Heat pulsates in every drop of water, it flows in the river, and it thunders in the ocean. Heat is in every breath of air, in every grain of dust, and in every living thing.*

Ver. 7.—“*The law of the Lord is perfect.*” The law of Jehovah here means undoubtedly the revealed will of God. And there are no less than five other words used in this Psalm to express the same thing. “*Testimony,*” “*statutes,*” “*commandment,*” “*fear,*” and “*judgment.*” All these epithets, though each possessing some special shade of meaning represent *one* thing. God’s revealed word—the Bible. This revealed word of God is here spoken of as “perfect,” “sure,” “righteous,” “pure,” and “precious,” and as having the power to convert, enlighten, gladden, warm, overwhelm with the sense of sin, and incite to earnest prayer.

ARGUMENT—The Psalm consists of three parts. The subject of the first is God’s revelation of Himself in His material works, ver. 1—6. That of the second is the still more glorious revelation of Himself in His law, ver. 7—10. The third shows the bearing of these truths upon the personal character and interest of the writer, and of all who are partakers of his faith. Ver. 11—14.”

HOMILETICS—God has given man two great revelations of Himself—*nature* and the *Bible*. Though one is much older than the other, there is a perfect agreement between them so far as they go together. They reveal the same God, the same morality, the same religion. This Psalm refers to both.

I. NATURE AS A PREACHER. Looking at nature in the light of a preacher, the first six verses of this Psalm bring under our attention no less than five points of thought.

First: *The theme of its discourse.* “The glory of God.”
Secondly: *The incessantness of its delivery.* “Day unto day.”

Thirdly: *The intelligibility of its language.* “Showeth

* See “The Harmony of the Bible with Experimental Physical Science.” By Rev. Arthur Rigg, M.A. Bell and Daldy.

forth knowledge." Its language is symbolic ; the easiest language to understand.

Fourthly : *The vastness of its audience.* "Their line is gone out through all the earth."

Fifthly : *The immensity of its resources.* The glorious sun is one of the vehicles through which nature preaches to man of God.*

Nature as a preacher continues its eloquent discourse from age to age, and its aim in all is to draw the mind of man from the visible to the invisible, from the material to the spiritual, from itself to universal being.

II. THE BIBLE AS A PREACHER. This preacher is here, as we have seen, called by different names. "Law," "testimony," "statutes," "commandment," "fear of the Lord," "judgments of the Lord." These names serve to present the Bible in some of its many aspects. The Psalm presents to our notice—

First: *The character of this preacher.* (1.) It is perfect. "The law of the Lord is perfect." The Bible is perfect in the sense of *completeness*, it lacks nothing as a rule of duty, it legislates for all the activities, relations, and conditions of our being. (2.) It is established. "The testimony of the Lord is sure." As a testimony it bears witness to eternal realities, it declares that which is true to immutable facts, and therefore is "*sure*." It is more settled than the everlasting hills, more permanent than the stars. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of my word," &c. "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of God shall stand for ever." (3.) It is righteous. "The statutes of the Lord are right." The principles of duty which it inculcates agree with man's original and profound sense of right. Analyze the Decalogue, and discover, if you can, one single precept that clashes with man's fundamental notions of rectitude. (4.) It is holy. "The com-

* All these points will be found enlarged upon in HOMILIST, third series, vol. x, p. 210.

mandment of the Lord is pure." It is pure in itself—free from all stain and imperfection, and pure in its tendency and aim, it teaches men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, &c. The law is holy, just, and good. "The fear of the Lord is *clean*." (5.) It is thoroughly sound. "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." All of them agree with reason and conscience. (6.) It is precious. "More to be desired are they than gold. Yea, than much fine gold, sweeter also than honey and the honey comb." (a.) Gold is valuable—this is more so. (β.) Honey is delicious—this is more so.

In saying the Bible is all this, of course we mean that it is *substantially* so; so in the great moral truths and principles which constitute its very essence. The Bible is something distinct from the costume in which it comes to us, distinct as the soul from the body. Its costume is often a human manufacture, and bears the marks of human imperfection, but its essence is incorrupt and divine. Though it comes to us in "earthen vessels," the treasure is priceless and perfect. "This book is the mirror of the Divinity—the rightful regent of the world. Other books are planets shining with reflected lustre: this book, like the sun, shines with ancient and unborrowed ray. Other books have, to their loftiest altitudes, sprung from earth: this book looks down from heaven high. Other books appeal to understanding or fancy, this book to conscience and faith. Other books solicit our attention, this demands it; it speaks with authority, and not as the scribes. Other books guide gracefully along the earth, or onwards to the mountain summits of the ideal: this and this alone, conducts up the awful abyss which leads to heaven. Other books, after shining their season, may perish in flames, fiercer than those which consumed the Alexandrian library; this, in essence, must remain pure as gold, and unconsumable as asbestos amidst the flames of general conflagration. Other books may be forgotten in the universe when suns go down and disappear like bubbles in the stream; this book, transferred

to a higher clime, shall shine as the brightness of that eternal firmament, and as those higher stars, which are for ever and ever."

Secondly: *The work of this preacher.* What is the work which this preacher has to do? It is here represented (1.) As a soul-restoring work—"converting the soul." In the margin, "restoring." The great aim of this preacher is to restore souls, restore them to the knowledge, the image, the fellowship of the great God. "It is the power of God unto salvation." (2.) As a mind-enlightening work. "Making wise the simple," and "enlightening the eyes." "By them is thy servant warned." The word "simple" here does not stand for innocence, but for ignorance and inexperience. The Bible enlightens the spiritually ignorant, and guides the inexperienced in the paths of peace. It makes men "wise unto salvation." (3.) As a heart-gladdening work. "Rejoicing the heart." It gladdens the heart by removing its guilt, harmonizing its contending powers, purifying its loves, and brightening its hopes. Its aim is to "fill the soul with all peace and joy in believing, that we may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost." (4.) As a life-regulating work. "In keeping of them there is great reward." The truths which the Bible preaches to man are not for mere speculation, study, or controversy, but for practice; they are to be kept, to be embodied in actions, translated into life. The doer of the work is the man that is blessed in his deed. (5.) As a sin-convincing work. "Who can understand his errors?" The work of this preacher is deeply to impress men with a sense of their sins. In the light of its laws the soul exclaims, "Who can understand his errors?" "I have seen an end to all perfection; thy commandment is exceedingly broad." "Who can understand his errors?" Who can understand their origin, their number, their variety, their heinousness, their bearings, and issues? (6.) As a prayer-exciting work. It leads to prayer.

The Psalmist here prays for two things. (a) He prays

against sin. He prays to be delivered from the sins he has already committed—"Cleanse thou me from secret faults." And to be kept back from the commission of others—"Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me," &c. (β.) He prays for holiness. "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord my strength and my redeemer." This text implies three facts concerning human words and thoughts.

First: *That God takes cognizance of human words and thoughts.* No word escapes his ear, no thought his eye.

Secondly: *That God is pleased with right words and thoughts.* "To that man will I look who is of a broken heart and a contrite spirit."

Thirdly: *That God aids man in the promotion of right words and thoughts.* Hence the prayer.



THE ASIATIC HEAVENS.

IN the East the contemplation of the heavens is peculiarly adapted to give a deep impression of the greatness of God as the Creator. Very vivid is the impression which we retain of the solemnizing and exulting effect of the beautiful heavens above our head during our frequent night journeys, or when in the time of summer we have rested beneath its open cope, and remained for hours awake, wrapt in devote admiration of the glorious scene. Nor by day is the view of the vast firmament of deep blue, unbroken by the smallest fragment of cloud, less admirably to those whose eyes have been accustomed to a far different prospect. The celebrated traveller, Carsten Niebuhr is described by his son as solacing himself in his blind and lame old age, with the distinct images of Eastern travel which his mind retained. He said to us, that as he lay thus blind upon his bed, the images of all that he had seen in the East were ever present to his soul; and that it was therefore no wonder that he could speak of them as of yesterday. In like manner, there was vividly reflected to him in the hours of stillness, the nocturnal view of the Asiatic heavens, with their brilliant host of stars, which he had so often contemplated: or else their blue and lofty vault by day; and this was his greatest enjoyment.—KITTO.

A Homiletic Glance at the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians.

The student is requested to keep in mind the following things, which will throw much light upon the Epistle. First: The circumstances of the writer when he wrote. He was a prisoner in Rome. During his residence there, in "his own hired house" (Acts xxviii. 30, 31), from the spring A.D. 61 to 63, he wrote the Epistles to the Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and to the Ephesians. It is generally supposed that this Epistle to the Ephesians was the first he wrote during his imprisonment. Secondly: The circumstances of the persons addressed. They lived, it is thought, in Ephesus, an illustrious city in the district of Ionia, nearly opposite the island of Samos, and about the middle of the western coast of the peninsula commonly called Asia Minor. It had attained in Paul's day such a distinction as in popular estimation to be identified with the whole of the Roman province of Asia. It was the centre of the worship of the great goddess Diana. Paul resided here on two different occasions. The first, A.D. 54, for a very short period (Acts xviii. 19—21); the second, for a period of more than two years. The persons therefore addressed in this letter are those whom he had converted from paganism, and in whom he felt all the interest of a spiritual father. Thirdly: The purpose of the letter. The aim of the Epistle seems to be to set forth the origin and development of the Church of Christ, and to impress those Ephesian Christians, who lived under the shadow of the great temple of Diana, with the unity and beauty of a temple transcendently more glorious. For the minute critical exegesis of this apostolic encyclical, we direct our readers to the commentaries of Alford, Webster and Wilkinson, Jowett, Harless, Stier, Eadie, Hodge, and last, though not least, Ellicott. Our aim will be to draw out, classify, and set in homiletic order, the Divine ideas reached by the critical aid of such distinguished scholars.

SUBJECT: *Covetousness Amongst the Worst of Human Crimes.*

"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them." (Eph. v. 3—7.)

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 3.* "But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints." Bishop Ellicott's translation is, "But fornication and all manner of uncleanness or covetousness, let it not be even named among you as becometh saints." "Fornication" and "uncleanness" were vices to which the heathen were especially addicted; they revelled in unlawful sensualities. (Rom. i. 24—29.) "Covetousness," that is, an inordinate love of riches, is too prevalent even in Christian society to require any explanation.

Ver. 4.—"Neither filthiness." The word *αλοχόρης* is not simple obscenity, but whatever is morally hateful. The adjective *αλοχρός* means

deformed, revolting—what excites disgust, physical or moral. It is the opposite of *καλός*, which means both beautiful and good; and hence *τὸ καλὸν καὶ τὸ αἰσχρόν* means virtue and vice. The substantive is equally comprehensive, and includes whatever is vile or disgusting in speech or conduct." The word nowhere else occurs in the New Testament. "*Nor foolish talking nor jesting.*" These two words, *μωρολογία* and *εὐτραπεία* are also rare words; they are found nowhere else in the New Testament. The former means the frivolous, senseless talk which is characteristic of fools; and the latter, though according to its etymology means politeness, here signifies an immoral levity of speech. It is not courteous, cheerful, pleasant speech that is forbidden, but empty jesting. "*Which are not convenient*"—which are unbecoming.

Ver. 5.—*Nor covetous man, who is an idolater.*" "The words *ὅς ἐστιν εἰδωλόλατρες* are by many referred to all the preceding nouns, so that the fornicator, the unclean person, and the covetous man are all alike declared to be idolaters. This is possible so far as the grammatical construction is concerned, but it is not natural, and not consistent with the parallel passage in Col. iii. 5, where the apostle singles out covetousness from a list of sins, and says 'It is idolatry.' This, too, has its foundation both in nature and in Scripture. The analogy between this supreme love of riches, this service of mammon and idolatry, is more obvious and more distinctly recognised in Scripture than between idolatry and any other of the sins mentioned."—(*Hodge.*) "*Hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*" The covetous man, with the foul libertine and immoral talker, will be excluded from that heaven which is here called "the kingdom of Christ and of God."

Ver. 6.—"*Because of these things cometh the wrath of God.*" *ὀργὴ θεοῦ.* The word here translated "wrath" occurs in about thirty-five other places in the New Testament.

HOMILETICS.—The subject which we gather from these words is, that *Covetousness is amongst the worst of human crimes.*

I. IT IS HERE CLASSED WITH CRIMES OF THE WORST CHARACTER. There are three sins, amongst which covetousness is placed in the text—unbridled licentiousness, "fornication," and "whoremongery"—revolting indecency, "filthiness," that which is so unchaste and impure as to awaken universal disgust; and immoral speech—speech that is frivolous, untruthful, obscene, profane. These are sins confessedly of enormous magnitude. All true souls recoil from them, all pure minds renounce them as a degradation of the race, and an offence to Almighty God. But mark, amongst these *covetousness* is placed. It is ranked with them as related to them in moral vileness.

More than this, it is singled out as worse than these

—"a covetous man who is an *idolater*." What is idolatry? Holding anything nearer to the heart than God. The "covetous man" loves money more than anything else, and money is his God. We here in England are very zealous for the conversion of heathen idolaters. We create and sustain costly organizations, but there is no idolatry more real, more powerful, more damning than the idolatry that prevails throughout England. What god in heathendom is more earnestly and constantly served than MAMMON is served in this island? Before the introduction of Christianity into this country, there were many idols here. "In Scotland stood the temple of Mars; in Cornwall, the temple of Mercury; in Bangor, the temple of Minerva; at Malden, the temple of Victoria; in Bath, the temple of Apollo; at Leicester, the temple of Janus; at York, where St. Peter's now stands, the temple of Bellona; in London, on the site of St. Paul's Cathedral, the temple of Diana; and at Westminster, where the Abbey rears its venerable pile, a temple of Apollo." But *mammon* now has a temple everywhere, a temple on every hill and in every valley, in every church and house. Mammon has said to England, "Thou shalt have no other gods beside me," and England heartily responds, "Amen."

II. IT IS HERE CLASSED WITH THE WORST OF CRIMES, AS EXCLUDING FROM THE KINGDOM OF GOD. "For this we know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." From this passage may be inferred—

First: That heaven is a *kingdom*. There is rule and order there.

Secondly: That heaven is a *divine* kingdom. "Kingdom of Christ and of God." Christ reigns there. He is in the midst of the throne—His Spirit animates all—His Spirit fills all with adoring wonder and worship. Christ reigns as God there. βασιλεία τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ Θεοῦ. Christ and God. The heavens are a kingdom managed not by Divine partnership; it is governed by God in Christ.

Thirdly: That heaven *excludes* evil characters of all descriptions. How clearly and forcibly this is declared in Scripture.

“The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness . . . of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Gal. v. 19—21.) “Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.”

With the excluded will be the *covetous* man. Yes, though he has been a member of a Christian Church, though cultured in intellect, chaste in feeling, and refined in manners, though an eloquent preacher of the Gospel of benevolence, he will find no admission into that world. He will be “without.” With whom? Will he have a place set apart for himself? No, with the common damned.

III. IT IS HERE CLASSED WITH THE WORST OF CRIMES REPUGNANT TO THE DIVINE NATURE. “For because of these things cometh the wrath of God.” Paul says, in his letter to the Romans, “That the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.” His deep, settled, immutable antagonism to wrong of all kinds is clearly revealed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

But is there any sin more repugnant to the Divine Nature than covetousness, which is idolatry? What sin has the Almighty denounced with greater frequency and force than that of idolatry? But why should covetousness be so abhorrent to the Almighty?

First: *Because it involves a mal-appropriation of the blessings of Providence.* God’s will is that whatever a man either by good fortune or by industry, obtains of this world’s goods, should be expended for the advancement of truth, and the general promotion of human happiness. But the covetous man appropriates all to pamper his own appetites, gratify his own vanity, and promote his own selfish and ambitious ends.

Secondly: *Because it involves an utter perversion of his own spiritual nature.* The powers of the soul are not given to amass material wealth, nor the affections to love it. On the contrary, they were given to gather elements of the highest knowledge, and to love and serve the Infinite supremely in all. The soul

was made to have God, not money, as the dominant subject of thought, and the dominant object of love.

Thirdly : *Because it involves the promotion of misery in the universe.* Nothing is more repugnant to the heart of the loving God than misery. The cause of universal happiness is His, but the covetous man is necessarily a promoter of misery in his own soul, misery in his circle, misery through the creation. God's order is that no man should live unto himself, that all should labour for the common weal ; in this way only the good of the universe can be served, its blessedness advanced, and its order maintained. Every man who sets himself up as his own end in labour, and life, opposes all the arrangements of God. He does what he can to create discords in its harmonies, miasma in its atmosphere, poison in its streams. No wonder, then, that the "wrath of God" is against "the covetous man."



Germ of Thought.

THE BYEWAYS OF THE BIBLE.—No. XXIII.

SUBJECT : *The Fatherhood of Jehovah.*

"Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant."—Psa. xxxv. 27.

Analysis of Bomily the Eight Hundred and Sixtieth.

THIS passage, when steadily looked at, has a very wonderful light, almost, in some respects, like that of the sun. When any collection of the solar rays is separated by the use of a prism, three different kinds of rays are said to result ; some that illuminate or give light, some that exert magnetic or chemical action, and some that give heat. In this pencil of scriptural rays we find a similar threefold division. In other words, we find—I. Wonderful truth ; II. Wonderful faith ; and III. Wonderful comfort.

I. **WONDERFUL TRUTH.** Here is a doctrine declared to us of a very marvellous kind. The Lord Jehovah who is elsewhere described to us as a jealous God and a consuming fire, is here revealed to us as a father. Just as it delights an affectionate father to see his children successful and happy, so it pleases God to see the prosperity of those who serve Him. Nor is this the only Old Testament declaration of its kind. The book of Job, when read to the end ; Prov. xi. 20 ; Zeph. iii. 17 ; Psa. cxlix. 4 ; and Psa. clvii. 11 ; all say much the same thing—the last quoted introducing a most important additional truth in the words, “Those that hope in his mercy.” This is to come up to the most beautiful ideal of fatherly affection ever presented to the world. When the prodigal trusted to the mercy of his father, we know how that father rejoiced in the prosperity of his child. That God will do the same by us is the full truth of our text.

And very wonderful truth it is, too—such as no man ever yet discovered, or perhaps believed, of himself. Witness the various non-christian or even semi-christian religions of mankind. The ancient heathen believed universally that the gods had particular pleasure in the miseries of mankind, and that they envied rather than rejoiced in the prosperity of human beings. Just as it is said in certain countries, that no thriving merchant dares acknowledge his wealth, lest the authorities should immediately strip him, so did the heathen of old days feel with regard to their gods. So, again, the real devotees of modern Paganism show their belief in the malignity of their idols by torturing themselves for their sakes. And, in the same way, those exactly opposite deviations from true Christianity, Romanism, and ultra-Puritanism, finally meet together at the opposite side of the circumference on this very point. Where is the difference in principle between the studiously absurd dress of some sects, and the serge garment and rope girdle and tonsured head of the monk ? Are not a rigorous quakeress and a nun first cousins ? What are such things as fasting for mere fasting’s sake, pilgrimages, and other miseries endured by way of penance, and the absolute prohibition of even innocent pleasures in any measure, but so many sacrifices to Moloch—offerings to a god who is believed different from the God of

our text. There are some savage Protestant ideas of Sabbath observance (deeply as I revere and believe in that day), and some cruel Roman Catholic convent regulations for the acceptable worship of God, which are exactly on a par on this point. So difficult is it even for those who mean well (as I believe many do on both sides) to open their eyes thoroughly to the full glory of our text. The highest test of the purest Christianity, is to say, "Abba, Father," from the heart. (Rom. viii. 15.)

II. Observe next, therefore, the WONDERFUL FAITH which is evidenced in this case. We are looking, it must be remembered, on a fossil, and not on a recent animal, as the geologists say, in our text. The declaration it contains is not a new one, but one of far antiquity, as texts go. It was uttered in the midst of a state of things which has long since passed away—at a date which is so remote that it is impossible to fix it—most probably by the greatest of all Psalmists himself—certainly long before Christ. And, if before Christ, what then? I answer, before the grandest series of events ever known in the world; before the incarnation, nativity, miraculous ministry, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus; before those very events, that is to say, on which we now rely most of all to prove the doctrine of our text. These were the proofs, as you know, on which our Lord Himself depended. (John iii. 16.) So did his Apostle John pre-eminently. (1 John iv. 9, 10.) As for the Apostle Paul, he cared to know nothing else. (1 Cor. ii. 2.) And the feelings and convictions of Christian men have corresponded ever since. True Christianity, as it consists in a full belief in God's love for sinners, so it has ever pointed in proof of it to the blood of the Cross. And all its opponents, also, in their peculiar manner, by endeavouring to overthrow or obscure that great monument of eternal love, have shown their sense of it as a proof. "I could believe anything in the Gospel," said a sceptic, "if I could believe that God gave His Son for my sins." This witness was true. Given, the great fact, that "God spared not his own Son for our sakes"—all difficulties vanish, all objections are silenced, all other proof is unnecessary. We are sure of God's love.

But he who penned our Psalm was without this great proof. The glory of the Sun of Righteousness had not then risen on the earth ; not even the twilight of its approach was discernible ; at the utmost, the morning star was visible in the East. Yet here we find him walking in the darkness as the best of us do in the light. This is the marvel of his faith. That which some of us can scarcely reach from our higher level he attained to from below. The Cross itself scarcely convinces some Christians of the truth of our text. He never beheld the Cross, yet he believed the doctrine, and anticipated it in his song.

Let it not be forgotten, too, that he did this in the face of much evidence the other way. This song of praise came, as the 130th Psalm did, from the depths. He who wrote it was full of fears and alarms ; enmity and ingratitude, and persecution and scorn were about him on every side. Had he "walked by sight," therefore, he would have concluded that Almighty God had pleasure in his grief. Other Psalmists, less strong in faith, had all but concluded so in their day. (Psa. xxxvii. and lxxiii.) But it was not so in his case. Though there was a tempest added to the darkness, though he had less public evidence than we have, and though his personal experience was of that kind which has so often distracted the faith of the strongest, still his faith remained firm. It was like Daniel's voice out of the den of lions—a voice which King Darius could scarcely believe when he heard it—bearing testimony to God's love.

III. The WONDERFUL COMFORT of this passage runs in two principal lines. Who taught this truth to the Psalmist ? Who gave him such deep-seated faith in it ? Whose finger engraved it thus on his inmost spirit ? We climb up to it on the ladder of reasoning, and argue our believing way to it from the grand evidence of Christ's Cross. He ascended to it without any such instrumentality, and, as it were, by a leap. What but the wings of inspiration themselves could have taken him there in this way ? This inference is all the more precious, because there are some things in other parts of the Psalm which almost appear to savour of the earth ; but here we have a kind of manna, which must have come from above. Is it possible that

the earthly was permitted to give not only greater lustre, but greater authority, to the rest ? (See 2 Cor. iv. 7.)

The other stream of comfort is of an experimental description. What a prospect lies before anyone who really hopes in God's mercy, and really endeavours to serve Christ. His "prosperity" pleases God. Such a declaration is almost better than a promise ; it does away with the need of one. The obligation of faithfulness is not necessary where the obligation of love is in force. Try and think of this at the hour of prayer. When you are asking God to bless you, if you are really a servant of His, and really believing in His Son, you are asking Him to please Himself. Such is the Christian truth which comes to us from the days beyond Christ. May it quicken all that is holy, and mortify all that is sinful, and comfort all that is troubled, in every heart !

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THE FOREIGN PULPIT.—No. XXV.

SUBJECT : *The Christian's Riches.*

"All things are yours ; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas. or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come ; all are yours ; and ye are Christ's ; and Christ is God's."—1 Cor. iii. 21—23.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Sixty-first.

THE reproach is often cast upon Christianity that it is a religion of poverty, sorrow and mourning. Life, they say, abounds with pleasures, but the Christian must renounce them ; the heart is made to be bright and joyous, but the Christian is required to afflict his heart with sorrows. The world is beautiful and charming, but the Christian can only contemplate it through a gloomy veil. The world's resources are endless, but the Christian must regard them with suspicion.

Is this a fair view of the religion of Christ ? It is true that Jesus first called to himself the poor and sick, but did He re-

ject the rich counsellor, Joseph? It is true the heart must feel the scourge of penitential grief, but is there no balm of grace? It is true the Lord calls this a dark and fallen world, but did not He come as the light of truth? Christianity seems to deprive, but it enriches. The life of Christ, a beautiful illustration of this. Poor in the manger; poorer when he said "the foxes have holes, &c.;" poorer still on the cross; but the ascension, the gift of the Holy Ghost, the Church on earth, are the proofs of unsearchable riches. Christianity seems to impoverish, it really enriches.

THE CHRISTIAN'S RICHES—this is the subject, and two topics of inquiry suggest themselves.

I. WHEREIN DO THESE RICHES CONSIST? The answer the Apostle gives is at first sight amazing—outstrips our boldest desires. "All things are yours." The Apostle is in earnest, and means what he says. How can the Christian be poor? The Christian's riches consist in this, **THAT ALL THINGS ARE HIS.**

It was not without intention, moreover, that the apostle placed at the head of the list of details, **THE GREAT APOSTOLIC PERSONALITIES.** For the highest of man's possessions is man. It is true that in every star that looks down from heaven, in every flower that opens its calix to the sun, in every tree laden with summer fruits, in every rill that falls down the mountain side, we see the wisdom and goodness and glory of our God; but what would this whole creation be, with the fulness and variety of its phenomena, but for man, the image of God, called of God to leave on this created world the stamp of his spirit and the impression of his nature! How can we say "all things are ours" if we cannot first of all call man ours?

But it is man who appears to be least of all ours. How many a wealthy man would have given thousands to rescue the life of a beloved child; but the child was snatched away. How many an illustrious man would have cheerfully laid aside his dignities, if it had been possible thereby to lengthen a beloved partner's life; but she must be given up. How willingly would we have sacrificed a portion of our own life to redeem that of a friend; but the sacrifice was not accepted. How then can we

say that men are ours, if we cannot hinder their being snatched away from us ?

It is true that what is earthly, human, and perishable in man, does not belong to us ; of that we must be deprived. But what does that signify ? All that is eternal, imperishable, and holy in human nature is ours, and cannot be snatched from us. Centuries have passed since the great apostles, called in our text Paul, Cephas, Apollos, were snatched away ; but have they ceased to be ours ? The word of repentance which they preached, has it not awakened us ? The testimony they bore to the grace in Christ, has it not converted us ? The example of love which they have set forth, has it not enlightened us ? The good fight which they fought, has it not strengthened us in our conflict with sin ? Their patient perseverance, has it not encouraged us ? Their unquenchable hope, has it not animated us ? This Paul, this Peter, this Apollos, they are ours. And not only are they ours ; all who walk in their footsteps are ours, too—all faithful witnesses to Christian truth, all heroes of the faith, all who have suffered in love. The Church of the saints, invisible, yet visible in its effects, is ours, connecting us with the old apostolic Church. Yes, they too are ours who would not regard themselves as ours, and who seem to be far removed from us. Paul had been a persecutor of the Church, and became its protector. Peter was a shaken reed, and became like a rock. Apollos was a disciple of the false Greek wisdom (Acts xviii. 24), and became a scholar of Christ. We will not despair, then, of those whom we cannot call ours in reality. Whatever of truth and love is in them is already ours. If they will not pray with us, at least we will pray for them. If they will not believe with us, we will, nevertheless, believe in their conversion in the future. If they will not love with us, we will not cease to love them. If they will not hope for and press unto the eternal salvation, we will not cease to hope for them, and to press it upon them. Why should we not have patience with them, and expect, since the Lord has waited so long and with such patience for us ?

But while all that is eternal in human nature belongs to us, what does the apostle mean by saying the same of **ALL OTHER CREATED THINGS** ? On few things do we seem so dependent.

There is the lightning flaming into our dwelling ; the hailstorm devastating our fields ; the flood breaking through the protecting dam ; there is the pestilence invading the sanctuary of home, and taking away the best beloved ; there is war spreading its horrors about us, and destroying in a few moments the blessings of centuries—can we say that these wild, unregulated, malicious powers belong to us ? These forces, which neither the mind nor the will of man can tame or control—are they ours ? That wonderful power that carries men across the country, as it were on the wings of the wind, that still more wonderful power which multiplies thought with lightning speed, and makes it as accessible to the poor in their cottages as to the rich in their palaces ; that gold which rules the hearts of men as with a magic wand ; that spirit of inquiry which is studiously intent on rising to the highest heights, and plunging into the lowest depths—can we say that these powers belong to us, Christians ? Even the gentle gifts which summer scatters over the trees and fields, will not misuse desecrate them, will not sin poison them ?

It certainly seems as though there were much truth in these contradictions. But we must not be misled by appearances. The apostle's statement is true—"all things are yours." For can misfortune touch us, loss bow us down, trouble overpower us, when we know that all things work together for good to them that love God ? When we know that we are not the sport of chance, but that the Almighty and all-loving hand of God sends these trials to us ; when we have the experience, too, that we are purified by them as gold by the fire ? Are not, then, even these hostile forces ours, and do we not derive from them a rich and pure gain ? It is true that the commercial activity of the day may serve the purposes of sin, and favour the enterprises of the wicked ; but does it fail to serve the purposes of the kingdom of God, and to forward the enterprises of the righteous ? It is true that a prolific press forges weapons of falsehood and sows the dragon-teeth of ungodliness ; but does it fail to forge the weapons of truth for us and to scatter the seeds of truth abroad ? It is true that gold enters many a house with a message of hatred and hostility ; but does it cease to be an angel of love and comfort when we carry it into the dwellings of the poor and wretched ? It is true that the spirit of inquiry

kindles a fire-brand and casts it into the very sanctuary of God ; but does it not also kindle the flame of wisdom and throw light into the sanctuary of divine truth ? And though the gifts of God are desecrated and misused, do they cease to be of use for the glory of God ? Certainly there is no power and no gift of God in this world which may not be employed by us in the service of His kingdom, which may not be made, in the sense of the apostle, ours.

But, says the doubter, there is one thing you cannot make your own. It is all-embracing time with life and death, the past, the present, and the future. We will not dispute that there is nothing on which men seem so dependent as time. What are we to say of LIFE—is this ours ? We devise a plan of life to-day, to-morrow it lies in ruins at our feet. We build to-day on our health, to-morrow we are stretched on our bed. We glory to-day in our success, to-morrow misfortune is at our door. And if we could call life our own—how about DEATH ? WHEN we shall die we do not know ; THAT we shall die is certain. The eye, now bright and clear, will one day fail. The hand that now contributes something to the destiny of the world, will one day be cold. The heart, now beating with youthful vigour, will one day cease to beat. There are some, says the apostle, truly, who during life never cease to be in bondage to the fear of death. (Heb. ii. 15.) And is the past ours ? What we have done, we have done and cannot recall. What we have lost, we have lost and cannot replace. With many men the past is changed into a field of stubble, the harvest wind rustling as through dry stalks. And how can the present or the future belong to us ? At the present moment is not the future dark before us ? What will happen in the next hour or day we cannot tell—how can we promise ourselves in regard to coming years ? It is as though night were about us ; many a heart is anxious, many an eye is wet with tears in secret.

Amid these apparent contradictions we hold immoveably to the apostle's word when he calls time, including life, death the past, the present, the future—OURS. Of course the empty, perishing, earthly life is not ours. But what does this signify ? On the other hand eternal life, whose pledge for us is the re-

surrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, will after THIS life first attain its full perfection. This ETERNAL life is ours, and death cannot rob us of it. For death is ours in Christ. We would not indeed despise or mock him. He is, and remains, what the apostle calls him, our "last enemy." But we need no longer fear him, for his power is broken; and though his terrors may yet trouble us, we shall overcome death. But the past, too, is ours. The centuries have swept away a hundred signs of human devotion; one is left, it is the Cross. Thousands of words of human wisdom have been forgotten; the word of God remains. Unions have been formed and dissolved, the Church of Christ remains. Names that once shone brightly in the firmament are now never mentioned; one name remains, it is the name Jesus Christ. Numberless hopes have vanished like the morning mist; one hope remains, is ours—the hope of eternal life. The past is ours: all that is worthy and imperishable in it. And, therefore, are the present and future ours too. Let men set up new signs, the Cross alone will remain. Let them utter beautiful and wondrous words, they will all cease to be heard; the divine word—our word—will remain. Let unions be formed, the Church is alone eternal. Let new names rise into favour, they will all disappear like meteors, while the name of Christ will be like the sun. Let new hopes delude men, our hope is an anchor sure and steadfast. Be comforted. The dark night conceals the present and the future, but we need not tremble. The day will come and the day-star will arise in your hearts. Be comforted. The future is certainly ours, for all things are ours.

II. THE CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED THAT THIS MAY BE SO. The natural man cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Therefore, cannot say "all things are mine," but must rather confess "I belong to all things." He cannot say, "all things are dependent on me," but must say, "I am dependent on them all." An appeal to experience will confirm this. There are moments when such men feel that they are not free, that instead of ruling they are ruled by circumstances.

THE CONTEXT shows how freedom may be gained, and with it the assurance that all things are ours. The apostle is not

addressing the unbelieving and impenitent and heathen, but (ver. 16) those who have received the Holy Ghost. This is the condition of our receiving the promised wealth. Those only who have received the Spirit, and have become new-born sons of God can say, "all things are ours."

But how are we to receive the Holy Ghost? Man is not by nature as he should be. The self-will and disobedience of our children are constantly reminding us that they are not as we would have them be. Many think otherwise than this, and say that we have only properly to develop human nature to make it what it should be.

Let it be plainly understood that this is not what Scripture teaches us. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. We have not the Holy Ghost by nature, and must receive Him as a gift of God's grace. Jesus Christ took upon Him our nature that we might share the nature of God. "Ye are Christ's," says the apostle. We must be His that all things may be ours. He is the vine, the way, the door, the light, the life.

How comes it to pass that, while these things are so, so many men are indifferent to them? Have you never heard of the sick who have accounted themselves whole, the ignorant who have thought themselves learned? This is so, too, in the region of the spiritual life. We need to become conscious of poverty.

How is this consciousness to be obtained? The apostle says, "and Christ is God's." Christ, comparing Himself with the Father, could see in the Father his own image. He could say, "I and the Father are one." Is it so with us when we compare ourselves with the Father? Who of us can say, "I and the Father are one"? The Father is pure, holy, true, just. But we? Well, for the sick there is a physician. The way to become possessed of the Christian's wealth is a threefold way. The way of repentance which leads us to the knowledge of what sin is before the Father. The way of faith which causes us to find in God, the Son, reconciliation and redemption from sin. The way of regeneration—we are renewed and sanctified by God the Holy Ghost.

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By R. VAUGHAN PRYCE, M.A., LL.B.

SUBJECT: *Man's Impotence and Power.*

"And greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."—John xiv. 12.

"For without me ye can do nothing."—John xv. 5.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Sixty-second.

CHRISTIANITY is a system replete with paradoxes. On almost every page of the New Testament there is what appears to be a contradiction, and not unfrequently the latter part of a verse seems flatly to deny that which the former part does apparently as clearly affirm.

He who gave this system to the world spake often in a way that bewildered his hearers. His own disciples were sometimes utterly unable to comprehend their Master's meaning, and we find them addressing each other thus: "What is this that He saith unto us? . . . we cannot tell what He saith." At one time, speaking of Himself in relation to the Supreme, He said, "I and my Father are one;" and on another occasion He exclaimed, "My Father is greater than I."

With regard to its adherents, there is the same seeming absence of simplicity. Each man is assured of his utter weakness, and yet to each there is a mighty task assigned. He is informed of his inability to do any good thing, and at the same time commanded to exert all his power to perform God's will. And, further, as if to make the matter more inexplicable, to negligence is affixed tremendous penalties, while industry has a great reward. Upon the very threshold an inquirer is presented with an enigma. To the question, What must I do to be saved? the reply is, Do nothing: it is not of works, lest any man should boast; still, he must work out his own salvation with fear and trembling; and yet again, it is God that worketh in him both to will and to do of His own good pleasure. When a man has entered the doorway of Christian experience, he is himself a problem; his freedom is servitude; his rest is arduous toil; his very life is a death. And the finale is more perplexing, as thus announced: "He that believeth on me, though He were dead, yet shall He live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die." Through the gates of death

the Christian passes to a life beyond life, and is able to say in the hour of apparent defeat, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown."

To the initiated, to the taught of God, these things may have been made plain. Such may understand in some degree how it is that when they are weak, then they are strong; that when they are most abased, then they are most exalted; and that in this kingdom he who is least, is greatest of all. But to an outsider the reconciliation may be a difficulty almost fatal; and perhaps the more ingenuous and single-minded the inquirer, the more imperative is his need of help. He must not, therefore, be treated harshly who cannot understand these things, especially if he manifests a disposition to learn. To twit him with his ignorance may chafe his spirit, but will be far enough from rendering him help. To expatiate upon our own privileges may be gratifying to our vanity, and feeding to our pride, but it will tend as little to his advantage as to our own advancement. It will testify that we are ignorant of the first principles of the religion which we profess, and that we know not what spirit we are of. To neglect him will be to act the part of the priest and Levite of ignoble notoriety; while to lead him to the source of spiritual instruction and of heavenly influence, will be to follow the example of the Good Samaritan, and, mayhap, to save a soul from death.

An understanding of these two passages in their respective and conjoined meanings must have the force and freshness of a revelation for the man who has laboured under the difficulty referred to. It must be the solution of the problem. From without only does there seem to be dissonance in Christian teaching and requirements; a correct view of our texts will place him within where all is clear and concise. To present him with this shall be our endeavour, and to this end we invert the order of the verses and notice —

I. MAN'S MORAL IMPOTENCE. Be it understood that we speak of man's spiritual capability, and of his want of spiritual power for good. He is powerful enough to do that which is sinful. His inclination leans, and passions propel him, in that direction. From the cradle to the coffin there is no point, from childhood to

old age there is no period when he does not feel that to serve the flesh in some phase is easy, and to serve God—especially in the highest degree of service—is difficult. Nothing is more pertinent to our position than the plea of Satan's servants. Men who live by pandering to the worst passions of humanity rebut any charge that may be brought against them with the remark, We do not compel men to do this, or that, or the other thing. No, no ; men need no compulsion. When you place a magnet in a line with a needle, it is not necessary that you push the needle ; something in the one answers to the influence of the other ; it is drawn, not driven. To cut a channel through the embankment of a reservoir is sufficient, though you never touch the water. It will flow forth in obedience to law. And so with man and evil ; you have only to appeal to that which is within him, and he will follow the lead.

While, however, this plea aptly enough illustrates our point, it is very far from justifying the tempter. The crime of the priests of old was that they made the people to sin, and that not by compulsion, but by attraction—they filled the groves with images. Some years ago the embankment of the reservoir above Sheffield gave way ; habitations were levelled, property was injured, and some lives were destroyed. If at the inquest it had transpired that some one had made a small aperture in the bank, through which the ever-widening and destructive torrent poured, and the man by way of defence had told the jury that he had not meddled with the water at all ; he would, notwithstanding, have been sent to the asylum or the penal settlements. He who exposes fire in a powder-mill is held responsible for all the damage of explosion, and so he who tempts men to sin—be he demon unclothed or clothed upon—will have a tremendous penalty to pay.

It is not contended that man is incapable of everything that is praiseworthy, nor that his character is destitute of every good trait. There is in men, as there is in the lower animals, much that is admirable. A man may be still-tongued or talkative ; he may be quiet or restless ; illiberal or loose-handed. But these things are natural qualities, and in themselves—like station and wealth—are neither good nor bad. It was no virtue on my part to be born, so it was no virtue on my part that I was born

with some good dispositions any more than my being born with certain bad ones was to me a vice. But we do not deny that good is good, whether it be a natural quality, a divinely imparted grace or an acquisition. Good is good, but all good is not religious good, just as money is money, whatever its form, but all money is not gold. A man may be sick whom a certain herb will cure, and a thousand people may be seeking this herb. But as they are seeking it regardless of him and of his wants, he does not feel personally obliged to any one of them. If a man seek the herb for him, expecting to be paid for his trouble, he will be serving the sick one. But if a friend seek it for him from pure love, to whom the offer of money would be an insult, then he would be rendering personal service of the highest kind. Religion, then, that of which man is incapable apart from Christ, and of which he is capable only so far as he is assisted by the Saviour, is God-service from love-motive. A man may be faultlessly honest and even generous, while God is not in all or any of his thoughts, and that is not Christian life ; but when a man is upright and benevolent, not because it is profitable or right, but because he knows it will please God, then that is religion. Doing good otherwise is doing good, just as a penny is money, but it is not religious good any more than that a penny is gold.

Further, we admit that apart from conscious and avowed faith in Jesus there may exist real religion. Any argument upon this subject which does not recognise the existence and wide-spread influence of Christianity must be by so much defective. If it be true that this system has a place amongst men ; that its principles permeate the customs of all civilized society ; that they are traceable in all our laws ; that they form the basis of nearly all other systems and colour all human life ; then it must be evident that men may—that they must—be even ignorantly indebted to it : may from it be constantly, if also unconsciously, drawing lessons for the rule of their life. Is it not thus that its influence is in great part to be felt and its mission accomplished ? Is it not the leaven thrown into the lump of society until the whole be leavened ? It is not necessary that the original leaven touch every particle of the meal, it will be by its influence that all is converted. When the sun's disc has sunk below

the western horizon, and the moon floods the landscape with silvery sheen, the thankful traveller trudges on by her aid, and reaching home informs his joyous wife that he has pursued his way by moonlight, and so he has. But, after all, what is moonlight? It is nothing but sunlight at second-hand. The sun emits his rays to the moon, and she reflects them down to us. Clearly, then, if there were no sun there would be no moonlight. Now what are the life and writings of the best men that have blessed the world but the life and the teachings of Jesus through earthly media. Moses, was he not taught of God? Paul, did he not inbreathe the Saviour's spirit? The martyrs, were they not manifestly inspired by their blessed Master's life, and cheered by His many and precious promises? To admire and to imitate any of these, then, is as truly to derive help from Christ as that to walk in moonlight is to be indebted to the sun. The fences of society, and the restrictions, and the requirements of the law, are, to a great extent, concurrent reflexions of the Christian system.

And then, has not the Spirit of Christ been given to all men that they may profit therewithal. Who has not had a holy suggestion or impulse at some time, he knew not from whence nor how? Men in general do not stay to inquire to whom they are indebted for such thoughts and promptings, but the Bible student knows that they come from the Spirit of God, poured upon all men for their good, or from the angels of His mercy, who are sent forth to minister unto those who are heirs of salvation. And oh, who can tell how much we owe to these influences? We may feel that to this grace we are great and daily debtors, but perhaps at no time have we an adequate idea of the measure of our obligation. My brethren, what saved us aforetime from sinking irretrievably into wickedness? Recollections of a pious mother's prayers and counsels? Whence her piety? The influence of some godly friend? Whence his godliness? Inward whisperings and admonishments? Whence came they? Were not our mother's grace and our friend's goodness moonbeams received from Christ, and reflected by them to us? And were not the heavenly impressions and impulsions that we then felt rays of light from the Sun of Righteousness? Verily, yes! It is not reprehensible enthusiasm, then, but the

natural expression of conscious obligation when the Christian sings :

“Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small ;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.”

This, then, is plainly the doctrine of the text, and the truth taught by all history, that apart from the teachings of Jesus Christ there is not sufficient light for the soul's life—these teachings being drawn direct from the Bible as water from the fountain, or from the lives and writings of others, as from streams issuing from that source. That apart from the mercy of God as declared by His Son, and exemplified in that Son's life and death, there is no hope for man as a sinner. And that only in the disposition of the Divine One toward us, as manifested by Him who came forth from the bosom of the Father, is there offered to man an adequate inducement to return, prodigal like, to a neglected, but still loving Parent's embrace. He is the only source of spiritual life, and separated from Him the soul must as surely perish as that a branch severed from the vine must die. But, blessed be his name, He loves us, for the restraining influences which we have felt through life, and the good desires, are but so many instances of contact between our soul and the Good Shepherd, who, leaving the ninety and nine in the fold, has unweariedly traversed the moral waste that He might find that which was lost.

We notice briefly the counter truth, viz.,

II. MAN'S MORAL POWER.

Nothing is more evident than this, that man is a powerful creature. He commands and it stands fast ; he wills that a mountain be hurled into the midst of the sea, and behold it is done. The prodigious achievements of the past, and the progressing wonders of the present, alike demonstrate this. But, as our text declares, under the influence of Christ's life and spirit, man is spiritually as well as physically potent. He can remove mountains of apathy and unbelief as verily as he can remove mountains of granite ; and he can cause a spiritual wilderness to flourish as a well watered garden as truly as he can

clothe moorland with verdure. Man can, with the materials at his disposal, and those only. That is the literal and unvarnished truth as taught by the words of Christ. It may be denied by some, and it may be ignored by the life and by the very prayers of others, but without a figure, and without exaggeration this is what the Bible declares: that man can in spiritual matters transform deformity into beauty, and barrenness into harvest. The command of Jesus to His disciples previously to His ascension was that they should go and disciple the nations. And if they had not the power why give them the command? Is it true that He is an austere man, seeking to reap where he has not sown, and to gather where He has not strewed? They make Him to appear such who deny man's power to save souls. Did not Luther and his compeers produce that great awakening from error in the 17th century known to us as the Reformation. And did not Wesley and Whitefield and their coadjutors work those miracles of revival that raised and blessed this country a hundred years ago? If it be said that God did it through their instrumentality, we ask, Were these men free? For if they were not driven by a power which they could not resist, then they did it as indisputably as that man turns a profitless prairie into a fruitful field. They fell in with divine operations, as a theologian would say; they adapted means to an end, as a philosopher, or statesman, or engineer would express it.

And where is the difference between man's potency in this respect and his power over material things? True in this he derives his wonderful energy from Christ, but what is he in anything of himself? He is not so strong as the horse upon which he rides, nor capable of as much fatigue as the dog who feeds upon the crumbs of his table. And yet there is no work, however vast, that his heart may desire accomplished, but his ingenuity can plan and his hand can execute it. To this end he studies the laws of the universe and obeys them, and so, by mastering and obeying the laws of the spiritual universe, by taking the power of Christ's life and love and applying it, he can remove mountains of sin, can uproot trees of social iniquity, can turn a moral morass into an Eden, and open communication between Mansoul and the skies.

Brethren, behold our weakness and our strength. Let us rid ourselves of the one and ensure the other. There is no necessity for the injection of a new force into the spiritual universe, nor for further miracle. The incarnation was the miracle, and even that was simply the disclosure to man of a force already existing—the power of gentleness, and the restoring energy of love—by which infinite Goodness and Mercy designed to raise and regenerate the race. Whatever our line of life, then, and however large or small our sphere, let us put on Christ; inbreathe His spirit and obey His laws. Then we shall find our rest in hallowed toil, and our reward in others' good. The blessing of Heaven will attend our labours and success follow our handiwork. This earth will be hallowed ground to us, and heaven but a higher apartment in our Father's house. And then, only then, shall the sanctified spirit be able honestly and joyously to say—"For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Keighley.

RICHARD GRAY.

Variations on Themes from Scripture.

(No. XV.)

SUBJECT: *Disallowed Designs.*

"**T**HERE are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." (Prov. xix. 21.) Even the counsels of the prudent He bringeth to nought. "There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel, against the Lord," nor any that prospers without Him. Without Him, where is the wise? where is the scribe? What, after all, is the wisdom of the children of this world, wiser in their generation than the children of light? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise." Nay, unworldly wisdom, in its forming of plans, and elaboration of schemes, and devising of devices,

enjoys no privileged immunity from failure, at the veto of Him who chargeth His angels with folly. "L'homme propose, Dieu dispose." The divine disposal of human proposals is oftentimes very summary and entire.

The proverb, "Man proposes, God disposes," is believed by one learned in such lore to be naturalised in every nation of Europe,—thus the Spanish, "La gente pone, y Dios dispone;" the German, with its corresponding jingle, "Der Mensch denkt's, Gott lenkt's, &c.,—so deeply upon all men is impressed the sense of Hamlet's assertion of a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will. Molière's shrewd-spoken Dorine enounces a truism when reminding Damis that,

"On n'exécute pas tout ce qui se propose ;
Et le chemin est long du projet à la chose."

A wise man endeavours, it has been said, by considering all circumstances, to make conjectures, and form conclusions; but the smallest accident intervening (and in the course of affairs it is impossible to foresee all) often produces such turns and changes, that at last he is just as much in doubt of events as the most ignorant and inexperienced person. What Shakespeare in his sonnets calls "millioned accidents" creep in between design and result, between plan and performance, between scheme and issue, and "blunt the sharpest intents." As the old moralising poet, modernised by Dryden, puts it—

"But see how Fortune can confound the wise,
And when they least expect it, turn the dice."

Fortune, or fate, is the popularly recognised agent in these reversals and collapses; and subtle philosophers speculate curiously on the plenipotent character of this agency. One such, for example, predisposed to paradox, may-be, yet no heedless or hasty penman, affirms, that if you look closely into the matter, it will be seen that whatever appears most vagrant, and utterly purposeless, turns out, in the end, to have been impelled the most surely on a preordained and unswerving track. Chance and change, he goes on to remark, love to deal with men's unsettled plans, not with their idle vagaries. So that, as he argues the

matter, if we desire unexpected and unimaginable events, we should contrive an iron framework, such as we fancy may compel the future to take one inevitable shape ; for then comes in the unexpected, and shatters our design in fragments.

The biographer of Columbus, narrating the story of his shipwreck in 1492, describes him as passing, with his usual excitability, from a state of doubt and anxiety to one of sanguine anticipation, and thus coming to consider his present misfortune as a providential event mysteriously ordained by heaven to work out the success of his enterprise. At once, therefore, he began to look forward to glorious fruits to be reaped from this seeming evil, and laid his plans accordingly. "Such was the visionary, yet generous enthusiasm of Columbus, the moment that prospects of vast wealth broke upon his mind. What in some spirits would have awakened a grasping and sordid avidity to accumulate, immediately filled his imagination with plans of magnificent expenditure. But how vain are our attempts to interpret the inscrutable decrees of Providence ! The shipwreck, which Columbus considered the act of divine favour, to reveal to him the secrets of the land, shackled and limited all his after discoveries." For it is shown to have linked his fortunes for the remainder of his life, to this island, which was doomed to be to him a source of cares and troubles, to involve him in a thousand perplexities, and to becloud his declining years with humiliation and disappointment.

"Le ciel agit sans nous en ces événements."

Et ne les règle point dessus nos sentiments."

It is instructive to note in the memoirs of Gabriel Naudé, that great scholar's exultant anticipation of the public opening of the library he had mainly helped to form. He must have reckoned on that day as a *beau jour* for him, the happiest day of his life ; and he arranged a fête accordingly, to be celebrated with his most intimate friends. But that very day broke out the public troubles of the Fronde ; and barricades in the streets of Paris ill accorded with Gabriel Naudé's cherished hopes. "Ainsi vont les projets humains sous l'œil d'en haut qui les déjoue." The Scotch ploughman-poet, eyeing the mouse and its "wee bit housie, too,

in ruin," as turned up by his plough, gave racy utterance to but a trite reflection, when, apostrophising the "wee sleekit, cow'rin, tim'rous beastie," he thus moralized his song :

"But, mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain :
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft a-gley,
And leave us nought but grief an' pain,
For promised joy."

As the good friar in Shakespeare has it,—

"A greater power than we can contradict
Hath thwarted our intents,"

well laid and discreetly devised as they seemed to be.

And as with the seemingly laudable plans of the prudent, so with the arrogant designs of the self-confident. The enemy said, "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil ; my lust shall be satisfied upon them ; I will draw my sword ; my hand shall destroy them." Thus said the enemy, even Pharaoh's host, on the shores of the Red Sea. But then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord : "Thou didst blow with Thy wind, the sea covered them ; they sank as lead in the mighty waters." It is but an emphasised reading of the standard text, that the Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought, and maketh the devices of the people of none effect, and casteth out the counsel of princes. Whereas, turning from man proposing to God disposing ; "The counsel of the Lord shall endure for ever, and the thoughts of His heart from generation to generation." The same is He of whom it is written that He turneth wise men backwards, and maketh their knowledge foolish.

Wordsworth, ever a moralist, moralised his song when, at a critical juncture in the legend of the "White Doe of Rylstone" he interposed this reflection—

"But quick the turns of chance and change,
And knowledge has a narrow range ;
Whence idle fears, and needless pain,
And wishes blind, and efforts vain."

For a closing variation on the present themes a worse might be found than this from the play within the play of "Hamlet"—

"But, orderly to end where I begun,—
Our wills, our fates, do so contrary run,
That our devices still are overthrown;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own."

FRANCIS JACOX, B.A.

Biblical Criticisms.

Passages in which the Remission of Sin is connected by Apostolical Writers with Christ; either His Life, or His Death, or His Resurrection.

(Continued from p. 237.)

IN the following passages the death of our Redeemer, the shedding of His blood, or the giving up of His body are specifically introduced.

The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His soul a ransom for many. *δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν.** (Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45.)

This is My body. (Matt. xxvi. 28; Mark xiv. 22.)

This is My body which is being given for you. *τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διδόμενον.* (Luke xxii. 19.) Which is being [broken] for you. (1 Cor. xi. 24.) [*κλώμενον*? †]

This is My blood, that of the new dispensation‡ which is being shed for many for the remission of sins. (Matt. xxvi. 28.) (Mark xiv. 24, omits the words *εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν.*)

This cup is the new dispensation in My blood, *ἐν τῷ ἐμῷ αἵματι*, which is being shed for you. (Luke xxii. 22; 1 Cor. xi. 25.)

The bread which I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world: *ἢν ἐγὼ δώσω ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ζωῆς.* (John vi. 51.)

The good shepherd giveth his life, *τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ,§* for the

* For many men, or many *ψυχαί*?

† The word *κλώμενον* is omitted by A, B, C.

‡ On this translation of the word *διαθήκη*, see HOMILIST next month.

§ Compare Acts xv. 26: *παραδεδώκεσι τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.*

sheep; I lay down My life.....that I may take it up again. (x. 11, 15, 17.)

I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me. (xii. 32.)

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life, τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ, for his friends. (xv. 13.)

The church of God (or the Lord) which He purchased through His own blood, ἣν περιποιήσατο διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος. (Acts xx. 28.)

God set forth Jesus Christ as^a a mercy-seat* (ἱλαστήριον *not* ἱλασμόν *here*) through faith in His blood, διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν αὐτοῦ αἵματι. (Rom. iii. 25.)

He was delivered for our sins, and raised, &c., παρεδόθη δια τὰ παραπτώματα. (iv. 25.)

Whilst we were weak, whilst we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν. (v. 9.)

Δικαιωθέντες ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ, justified in His blood. (v. 9.)

We were reconciled to God through the death of His Son; much more being reconciled, &c.: through whom we even now received our reconciliation, τὴν καταλλαγὴν ἐλάβομεν. (v. 10 11.)

We were buried with Him in our baptism. (vi. 3.)

Our old man was crucified with Him, in order that the body of sin might be brought to nought. (v. 6.)

We died with Christ. (v. 8.)

He died to sin. (v. 10.)

Ye became dead (or deadened) to the law through the body of Christ, διὰ τοῦ σώματος. (vii. 4.)

He condemned the sin in the flesh. (vii. 6.)

He Who spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all. (viii. 32.)

Christ Who died... (v. 33.)

For this Christ both died and rose again... (xiv. 9.)

The weak brother for whom Christ died, ὑπὲρ οὗ (xiv. 15; compare δι' οὗ, 1 Cor. viii. 11.)

We preach Christ as having been crucified. (1 Cor. i. 23; comp. 13, 17, 18, ii. 2.)

* The ἱλαστήριον was the place whence God showed Himself. "There will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims, which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel." (Exod. xxv. 22.) "And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with Him, then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him, from off the mercy-seat that was upon the ark of testimony, from between the two cherubims: and He spake unto him. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying," &c. (Numb. vii. 89; viii. 1.)

Christ our passover was sacrificed for us, τὸ πάσχα ἡμῶν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἐτύθη Χριστός (v. 7.)

Ye were bought at a price, ἡγοράσθητε τιμῆς. (vi. 20, vii. 23.)

Communion of His body, of His blood. (x. 16.)

Christ died for our sins. (xv. 3.)

If one died for all, then all died; and for all He died, that henceforth they that live, &c. (2 Cor. v. 15.)

If He was crucified of weakness, yet He liveth. (xiii. 4.)

With Christ have I been crucified. (Gal. ii. 20.)

He was set forth among you as having been crucified. (iii. 1.)

Christ purchased us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρασεν ἐκ τῆς κατάρας τοῦ νόμου γενόμενος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν κατάρα. (iii. 13, cf. iv. 5.)

Let me not glory, save in the cross of Christ, by whom, &c. (vi. 14.)

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the remission of our offences or sins. (Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14.)

Ye were brought nigh in the blood of Christ (ἐν τῷ αἵματι). He brought to nought the enmity, in His flesh, the law of commandments in decrees, in order that He might create the two [men] in Himself into one new man, making peace, and might reconcile the two in one body to God through the cross.....For by Him we both have our access. (Eph. ii. 13—18.)

He became obedient unto death. (Phil. ii. 8.)

The fellowship of His sufferings, being conformable (becoming conformed) to His death. (iii. 10.)

By Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; whether the things which are on the earth, or the things which are in the heavens. And you, once alienated and enemies in your mind in wicked works, yet now did He reconcile in the body of His flesh, through His death, to present you, &c. (Col. i. 20, 21.)

Ye were buried with Him in your baptism; you, when ye were dead in your trespasses.....[God] quickened together with Him, forgiving us all our trespasses; having wiped off the entry in decrees that was against us, and took it away from the midst, nailing it to His cross. (ii. 12—14.)

Ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world. (ii. 20.)

Ye died, and your life has been hid with Christ in God. (iii. 2.)

The purchase of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us. (1 Thess. v. 10.)

If we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. (2 Tim. ii. 12.)

We see Him Who was made a little (*or* for a little while) lower than the angels, for the suffering of death (διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου), crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God He might taste of death for every one. For it became Him [God], of Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the Captain of their salvation by means of sufferings. (Heb. ii. 9, 10.)

Since He hath made the children partakers of flesh and blood, He Himself also in like manner partook of the same, in order that through His death He might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver those who, through fear of death, through all their lifetime are subject to bondage (slavery). (ii. 14, 15.)

C. A. SWAINSON, M.A.

(To be continued.)

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

VAIN DISQUIETUDES.

"They are disquieted in vain."
—Psa. xxxix. 6.

WE detach these words from a Psalm composed, by a soul in sorrow, and solemnly descriptive of the trials and vanities of our mortal life. Human life is full of inquietudes. Unrest reigns everywhere. Souls have lost their centre, and they are tossed on the surges of contingency. "What shadows we are, and what shadows do we pursue," said the illustrious Edmund Burke, one of England's greatest statesman and grandest orators. All, like

Martha of old, are careful and troubled about many things."

The text leads us to remark that these inquietudes are *vain*, for two reasons.

I. BECAUSE THEY ARE UTTERLY USELESS Most, if not all, the things that occasion them are *inevitable*; they cannot be avoided, they come with all the certainty of law. Let us notice a few things that fill men with inquietude. There is, First: *The approach of age*. Faded beauty, waning health, numbed senses, palsied limbs, all these await us if we live long enough. The

prospect of these how it agitates men. But *vain* is the disquietude. No amount of mental distress can prevent the advent of the foreboded ills. There is—Secondly: *The advance of reformatiions*. During the last century, knowledge has struck a new impulse into the world's mind, the wheels of thought are set agoing, and the world is moving on to more liberal views, and freer institutions. Those who are attached to things as they are, whose notions are stereotyped, and whose habits are fixed, are sorely disquieted at the march of reformatiions. But all their anxiety is in vain. Men may as well attempt to turn back the tide as to retard the triumphant chariot of human progress. There is—Thirdly: *The separation from property*. All that we have, however much we prize it, must go. Houses, furniture, lands, parchments, all must pass from us some day. "Naked came we into the world, and naked must we return." At such a prospect souls are often sorely distressed. But all disquiet is utterly vain. Fourthly: *The advent of death*. Death is before all. The coffin, the shroud, the deep, dark grave—who does not shudder at these? But of what service is the disquiet. Death must come. No man hath power over his spirit to detain it. "There is no discharge in that

war." Why battle with the inevitable? Philosophy says that what cannot be avoided should be calmly endured. We only magnify these terrible events by allowing them to disquiet us. The disquietudes are vain.

II. BECAUSE THEY ARE REMOVABLE. Since Christianity has come all the disquietudes of the soul may be hushed. Godliness can make us calm in the very centre of our being. They are kept in "perfect peace," whose minds are stayed upon God. First: *The approach of age need not disquiet you*. You should regard yourselves as strangers and pilgrims on this earth and look for a city which hath a foundation, whose builder and maker is God. With Christianity you may even "glory in tribulation." Secondly: *The progress of reformatiions need not disquiet you*. You should trust in the paternal providence of God, and take no anxious thought for the morrow, &c. Thirdly: *The separation from property need not disquiet you*. There is in "heaven better and an enduring substance" that may be yours. Fourthly: *The advent of death need not disquiet you*. You cannot avoid death, but you can avoid its terror. Christianity can put you into a state of mind that will enable you to welcome it. "Oh death, where is thy sting?" &c.

CONCLUSION. — Had Christianity not come, your disquietudes would have been in vain, for they could not have altered the things that occasioned them. But now Christianity is come, you need have no disquietudes. Christ says to you, "Come unto me all ye that are weary, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee." Christ can rock all soul-storms into the sublime hush of heaven.

"Calm me, my God, and keep me calm,

Soft resting on Thy breast;
Soothe me with holy hymn and psalm,

And bid my spirit rest.

"Calm in the hour of buoyant health,

Calm in my hour of pain;
Calm in my poverty or wealth,
Calm in my loss or gain;

"Calm as the ray of sun or star,
Which storms assail in vain;
Moving unruffled through earth's war,

The eternal calm to gain."

THE PEDIGREE AND POSITION OF TRUE MEN.

"Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."—John xv. 19.

THE word κόσμος here translated "*world*" has various significations in the New Testament. Here, as well as elsewhere, it means that vast aggregation of human beings who are spiritually ignorant of the true God. Of this vast

assemblage Satan is said to be the prince, and it is represented as the "world lying in wickedness." Paul says he was crucified unto it, and it unto him. The text leads us to make two remarks concerning the pedigree and position of true men.

I. THE PEDIGREE OF TRUE MEN. They have been brought out of the world by Christ. "I have chosen you out of the world." First: *They were once in the world.* They were members of that vast assemblage of human beings who are in the "gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." That world is characterised by three things. (1.) *Practical atheism.* They who make up this world are practically without God. Though some of them may be avowed theists, they live without Him, and form their plans and work them out as if He existed not. "God is not in all their thoughts." They go into this city and that, and buy, and sell, and get gain, and never take Him into their counsels or calculations. It is characterised by, (2.) *An imperial materialism.* They have no practical recognition of a spiritual universe, spiritual relationship, and spiritual obligation. They are canopied by matter. They walk after the flesh; they live to the flesh. They seek their happiness, their wealth, their dignity, in earthly things. They endeavour to

get the bread of their being, the supreme good out of stones. It is characterised, (3.) *By a dominant selfishness.* Each one is governed by selfish interests. Self-interest is the goal towards which each directs his steps; self is the idol at whose shrine each renders his devotions. Secondly: *They have been brought out of the world by Christ.* Out of this world, from this vast body of human beings whose lives are all characterised by practical atheism, imperial materialism, and dominant selfishness, Christ brought his disciples, and brings all true men now. No one but Christ can bring true men out of such a state. Philosophy, civilisation, natural religion, all these are powerless. Christ alone has proved equal to the task. He penetrates men with the idea of the true God. He draws the curtains of materialism, and reveals the spiritual world. He destroys the selfishness and constrains men with his own love. This work of Christ is represented by an emancipation, a resurrection, a regeneration, a creation, and none of these appellatives are too strong.

II. THE POSITION OF TRUE MEN. They are rendered repugnant to the world by Christ. "Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." The words imply, First: That the hatred of the world

to true men is of the same kind as that which Christ experienced. Towards Christ it showed itself in slander, ridicule, misrepresentation, insults and cruelties. Its genius is persecution. The forms of persecution change, but the spirit remains. If it is prevented from [mangling the body, it will mangle the reputation. Venom rankles on from age to age in the serpent's seed against that of the woman. Secondly: The hatred of the world to true men is for the same reason as that which Christ experienced. Why did the world hate Christ? Because His purity condemned their depravity, His benevolence their selfishness, His humility their pride, His truth their prejudices, and His spirituality their carnal pleasures. For these reasons, now, the world *hates* true men. "Cain was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And *wherefore* slew he him? Because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous. This is the philosophy.

GOD'S REDEMPITIVE PROVISIONS FOR MANKIND.

"For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him."—Isa. lxiv. 4.

THE text leads us to consider three things concerning God's provisions for the good.

I. THEY ARE AS OLD AS THE WORLD. "For since the *beginning* of the world" Eternal Love made provision for man before all time. To God men were as *real* millions of ages before they existed as they were afterwards. Coming generations will be no more real to Him than they were before the universe was. His love for man is an "everlasting love," His redemption is an "eternal redemption," His atonement was a "lamb slain before the foundation of the world."

II. THEY TRANSCEND HUMAN CONCEPTIONS. "Men have not heard or perceived by the ear." The words are quoted, though not literally by the Apostle 1 Cor. ii. 9. He quotes them in allusion to the blessing of the Gospel. What human mind could have conceived what God has actually done for man in redemption? "He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all," &c., and through Him all things become ours. What is heaven?

III. THEY ARE PREPARED FOR THE GOOD. "Prepared for him that *waiteth* for Him." That is, for those who trust Him. His provisions are sufficient to make all men happy and happy for ever, but those only will be made happy who trust in Him. First. *All can trust in Him.* Secondly. *All ought to trust in Him.* Hence every man may participate in those blessings.

REJOICING IN HOPE.

"Rejoicing in hope." — Rom. xii. 12.

HOPE is an instinct of the soul. "Thou didst make me to hope when I was upon my mother's breasts."* As an instinct, it implies the existence of a prospective good, and the possibility of coming into the possession of that good. As an instinct, it is one of the strongest and most operative forces in our nature. "The poet Hesiod tells us, that the miseries of all mankind were included in a great box, and that Pandora's husband took off the lid, by which means all of them came abroad, but hope remained still at the bottom." The real worth of this instinct to man, like all others, depends upon the direction it takes. "Wrongly directed, it is a fawning traitor of the mind." The goodly scenes it spreads out to the soul turn out to be a mere mirage. False hopes are like meteors that brighten the skies of the soul for a moment, only to leave the gloom more intense and crushing. They are mere blossoms on fruitless trees, pleasing the eye for the hour, then fading away and rotting into dust. Few things are more distressing to the soul than the loss of a hope. Longfellow compares it to the "setting of the sun." Solomon speaks of it as "the giving up

* See HOMILIST vol. v., first series, p. 113.

of the ghost." But this instinct, rightly directed, is amongst the chiefest of our blessings. It is that which gives sunshine to the sky, beauty to the landscape, and music to the sounds of life. Such is the hope of which the apostle here speaks. "A joyous hope." "Rejoicing in hope." Two things are *essential* to a "joyous hope."

I. A RIGHT OBJECT. What is the object of a really happy hope? Whatever it be, it must not—First: *Be selfish.* Our own happiness is too *small* a thing for the hope necessary to fill us with happiness. So constituted is the soul, that the hope that is directed exclusively to its own happiness never satisfies. Down deep in the soul is the feeling that man has to live for something greater and nobler than himself. It must not—Secondly: *Be incapable of engaging all our powers.* Our happiness consists in the harmonious operations of all the sympathies and faculties of our complicated nature. Aiming exclusively at our *own* happiness will not bring out the conscience into melodious utterances. It must not be—Thirdly: *Less lasting than its own existence.* Man can never be fully happy whose hope is directed to the transient and the dying. What, then, is the object that will give a *joyous* hope? *Moral goodness*,—assimilation to the image of God. The soul whose hope is directed

to the realization of that eternal ideal of goodness that shines in the universe, that walks with majesty in the chambers of the conscience, and is embodied in the life of Christ, is alone filled with happiness. The preachers who are constantly making selfish appeals to the instinct of hope and fear in the human soul, who seek evermore to charm with heaven and terrify with hell, degrade human nature, misrepresent the Gospel, and foster that selfishness which is the devil of the universe. Moral goodness should always be held up as the object of hope, moral evil as the object of fear. The other thing essential to a joyous hope is

II. A CERTAIN FOUNDATION. Unless a man has good reason to believe that the object he hopes for is to be gained he cannot rejoice in his hope. Now, are there any good reasons for believing that a soul guilty and depraved can be brought into possession of true goodness, can be restored to the very image of God? If so, what are they? First, *The provisions of the Gospel.* The atoning doctrines, works, sufferings, life, and death of Christ, the agency of the Spirit, and the disciplinary influences of human life, are all divinely appointed methods to recreate the soul, and to fashion it into the very image of God. Secondly, *The biographies of sainted men.* History abounds with ex-

amples of bad men becoming good. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Thirdly. *The inward consciousness of moral progress.* The man who has got this hope is *conscious* that he has made *some progress*, and that the steps he has taken have been the most difficult. His past efforts are aids and pledges to future success. Do not such reasons as these constitute a good foundation for this hope?

CONCLUSION. Brothers, is the hope which you have a *rejoicing* hope? Does it widen and brighten the horizon of your being as you move on the path of life?

CHRIST AND THE LOST.

"The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."
—Luke xix. 10.

THE divinity of Christ is established not only by the direct statements He makes, but by the implication contained in such expressions as "the Son of man," "the Father is greater

than I." What need to tell us this! What an assumption implied in informing men of this! (Vide Bushnell on "The Supernatural.")

I. CHRIST'S VIEW OF MAN. "Lost." How different His view of us from our view of ourselves. Not in danger of missing the way, but lost. The depth of meaning in that term only Christ can know, because He only knows what full fellowship with the Father is.

II. CHRIST'S MISSION TO MAN. "To seek and to save." The lost are beneath the eye of infinite compassion. How different His thoughts of us from what we might have expected. He comes to earth. Why? To die for us. He, about to die, pleads with the Father to glorify Him. Why? That He might give eternal life. How different our thoughts of Him from His thoughts of us; from what He might have expected. He came to seek the lost; therefore should we seek Him. He came to save the sought; therefore should salvation be our desire; not deliverance from hell, but from sin—full and perfect salvation in Him.

III. CHRIST'S CLAIM ON MAN. (Ver. 8.) Consecration of substance to Christ. It is of Him; is to be used for Him; its proper use will secure spiritual blessing from Him. (Ver. 9.) The solemn duty of restitution. How few could compare with Zaccheus! R. V. P.

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCXXXVIII.)

A PROVIDENCE OVER MAN.

"Man's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?"—Prov. xx. 24.

THE doctrine of these words pervades the Bible, is frequently stated by Solomon, and accords with the reason and experience of mankind.* The words lead us to consider Providence,—

I. AS A REALIZED FACT.

"Man's goings are of the Lord."

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."

SHAKESPEARE.

We are not left to chance, not the creatures of caprice, nor are we the absolute masters of our own destiny. "Our goings are of the Lord." The life of every man may be divided into two chapters: The first, embracing all connected with his being which has taken place *irrespective of his own will*. How much there is here. For example, we had nothing to do with the questions whether we should exist at all: or if we existed, what should be the peculiar attributes of our being, who should be our parents, in what country we should be born, in what period of the world's history our lot should be cast, under what circumstances we should be

nursed and educated. All these things were absolutely ordered of the Lord. We had no voice whatever in connexion with them; we were absolutely passive. The other chapter in man's history embraces, secondly, all that is connected with *his history as a voluntary agent*. A period dawns when we all begin to act as free agents. We choose and reject; we adopt this course and eschew that; we create some circumstances and subordinate others, and in all we fancy and feel ourselves to be unrestrained and free. But in all these "goings" of ours we are under the control of the Lord. (1.) The good in us He originates. Whatever we do that is true, noble, and godlike, He inspires. (2.) The evil in us He controls. He subordinates to His own purposes, and makes it subserve the interest of the universe. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." The case of Joseph, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, and the Apostles, illustrate this. The crucifixion of Christ stands out above all other facts in history as a demonstration of God's overruling power of evil. Modern history also abounds with examples. Luther was violently carried off and confined in Wartburg Castle, and there he translated the Scriptures, and wrote upon the Galatians, &c., and preached every Sunday in

* See HOMILIST, fourth series, p. 177.

the Castle. Bunyan was twelve years in Bedford jail and wrote the "Pilgrim's Progress." Rutherford in Aberdeen Castle wrote his beautiful "Letters." John Welsh, in Blackness Castle, Madame Guion, in the Bastile, where she remained fourteen years, and wrote some of her sweetest poetry—the prisons of the Inquisition—"the day" only can reveal their silent sorrows and patient courage. The inscriptions on the walls alone are a glorious witness. The words lead us to consider God's overruling providence—

II. AS A DIFFICULT PROBLEM. "How can a man, then, understand his own way?" First. *How can he understand the freedom of his own way?* If all the good in him is divinely inspired, and all the evil overruled and subordinated, how can he be free? Must he not be in the hands of his Maker as clay in the hands of the potter? A philosophic reconciliation of man's moral freedom with God's comprehensive and unalterable plan is impossible. All that we know is, that we are *conscious* that we are free, that heaven holds us as responsible, and that our deepest nature acquiesces. Secondly. *How can he understand the future contingencies of his own way?* Whilst there are certain things in his future that are pretty clear to him, such as death and retribution, there are other things that lie in impenetrable gloom. We know not what a day may bring forth; our future may turn out the very reverse of what we intend. It is often so. "The Babel builders," says Mr. Bridges, "raised that proud tower to prevent their dispersion; and it was the very means of their

dispersion." (Gen. xi. 4—9.) Pharaoh's "wise dealing" for the aggrandisement of his kingdom issued in its destruction. Haman's project of his own glory was the first step of his ruin. (Esth. vi. 6—13.) Often, also, is the way, when not counter, far beyond our own ken. Little did Israel *understand* the reason of their circuitous way to Canaan. Yet did it prove in the end to be the "right way." As little did Ahasuerus *understand* the profound reason why "on that night could not the king sleep." A minute incident, seeming scarcely worthy to be recorded, yet a necessary link in the chain of the Lord's everlasting purposes of grace to his Church. (Esth. vi. 1.) Little did Philip *understand his own way*, when he was moved from the wide sphere of preaching the Gospel in Samaria, to go into the desert, which ultimately proved a wider extension of the Gospel. As little did the great Apostle understand that his "*prosperous journey*" to see his beloved flock at Rome, would be a narrow escape from shipwreck, and to be conducted in chains. Little do we know what we pray for. "By terrible things wilt thou answer us in righteousness, O God of our salvation." (Psa. lxxv. 5.) We go out in the morning *not understanding our way*, "not knowing what an hour may bring forth." (Chap. xxvii. 1.) Some turn, connected with our happiness or misery for life, meets us before night. (John iv. 7.) Joseph in taking his walk to search for his brethren, never anticipated a more than twenty years' separation from his father. (Gen. xxxvii. 14.)

And what ought those cross ways or dark ways to teach us? Not constant, trembling anxiety, but daily dependence. "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not: I will lead them in paths that they have not known." But shall they be left in dark perplexity? "I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." (Isa. xlii. 16.) Often do I look back amazed at the strangeness of my course, so different, so contrary to my way. But it is enough for me that all is in thine hands, that "my steps are ordered of thee." (Psa. xxxvii. 23; comp. chap. xvi. 9.) I dare trust thy wisdom, thy goodness, thy tenderness, thy faithful care. Lead me, uphold me, forsake me not. "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory."

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(No. CCXXXIX.)

SELFISHNESS IN RELIGION.

"It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, and after vows to make inquiry."—Prov. xx. 25.

THERE were under the Levitical dispensation certain things *prescribed* by the law as consecrated to God; such as *tithes*, *first-fruits*, *firstlings* of the herds and the flock. There were also things that were voluntarily consecrated or set apart as free-will offerings to Jehovah. It is to these, perhaps, that Solomon here specially refers. The expression, "to devour that which is holy," characterizes the conduct of those who appropriate that to their own use which had been

either by themselves or others consecrated to the service of God. The subject leads us to consider selfishness in religion. Selfishness everywhere is bad; it is the tap root of all wickedness, it is the stronghold of the devil, it is the chief of all the principalities and powers of darkness. But when selfishness intrudes into the temple of religion, it is peculiarly hideous. It is then the serpent amongst seraphs, the devil in the presence of Christ. Alas, it often does this. Selfishness is found oftentimes as operative in sanctuaries as in shops, in temples as in trades. The text indicates its two-fold working.

I. THE APPROPRIATING OF THE CONSECRATED TO PERSONAL USE. The text speaks of the man who "devoureth that which is holy." This was the sin of Achan, he robbed the treasury of the Lord. (Joshua vi. 19; vii. 1.) In truth this was the sin of the whole Jewish nation. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me? But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." (Mal. iii. 8, 9.) This is done now in England. First: *In the personal appropriations of ecclesiastical endowments.* Our forefathers, whether wisely or not, devoted immense properties to posterity for the promotion of divine ideas and divine virtues in this country. The ecclesiastics who appropriate thousands of this property to their own use, and by it live in palaces, fare sumptuously every day, and roll amongst their contemporaries in chariots of wealth and forms of splendour. What do they do? Do they

not "devour that which is holy?" Are they not pampering their appetites and feeding their vanity by that which is consecrated to God? Secondly: *In the assumption of sacred offices for personal ends.* Those who enter on the office of the ministry, whether in or out of the Episcopal Church (and it is to be feared the number is legion), in order to gratify the greed for wealth, or ease, or social power, what do they do but "devour that which is holy?"

They are turning to their own use an institution consecrated to the service of humanity. Thirdly: *In the adoption of the Christian profession from motives of personal interest.* There was a time when men made secular sacrifice to unite with congregations, and identify themselves with Christian churches. It is not so now. Those who join a church in order to get clients, customers, or patrons, what do they do but "devour that which is holy?" They use the Christian name, the divinest and most sacred thing in the world, for selfish and sordid ends. The text indicates the working of this selfishness in religion by—

II. THE ENDEAVOURING TO AVOID THE FULFILMENT OF RELIGIOUS VOWS. "And after vows to make inquiry." There are three ideas that must not be attached to this expression. First: *The idea that it is wrong to make religious vows is not here.* A vow means a solemn promise or engagement before God to render some service or make some sacrifice. And such vows are not only right, but binding and necessary. It is only as the soul makes a firm resolve to accomplish true and noble

things that it can rise from its degradation of depravity. Nothing great is done without solemn determination. Secondly: *The idea that it is wrong to break improper vows is not here.* There are vows which should never be made, such as the vows of celibacy, and the vows of sponsors in episcopal baptisms, and the vows of priests in their ordination to adhere for ever to the same creed and polity. The man who solemnly vows to retain the same beliefs for ever forswears his own progress, arrogates his own infallibility, and is a fool. The sooner a wrong vow is broken the better. Thirdly: *The idea that it is wrong to think upon the vow after it is made is not here.* No amount of thinking, however deep and earnest before it was made, precludes the propriety, obligation, or necessity of thinking about it afterwards. If the reasons for its formation are morally sound, the more they are thought upon the stronger they will become. If not, the more they are thought upon the stronger will appear the obligation for revocation. But the idea here is not to think after a religious or generous vow in order to *escape its fulfilment.* Selfishness often puts the mind to think afterwards in this direction and for this purpose. One man under high spiritual excitement, produced, it may be, by a providence, a book, a conversation, or a sermon, vows to consecrate so much of his property to the cause of humanity and Christ. The excitement passes away, the vow is felt by conscience to be binding, and selfishness urges the mind to contemplate methods for a satisfactory release. How

often this is done ! Another man loses his health, is laid on the bed of languishing, and death seems close at hand. He feels the touch of his icy fingers upon his heart. He makes a vow to God, he utters it in the presence of the minister and those about his bed, that should he recover, his life and property shall be consecrated to God. He is restored to all the robustness and buoyancy of former years. He remembers his vow ; its binding power is felt on his conscience, and selfishness sets him to think upon such methods as shall free him from its obligation, that enable him to live again according to his likings. In such ways as these selfishness urges men "after vows to make inquiry." God deliver us from selfishness. How graphically one of our poets paints a selfish man—

"He pours no cordial in the wounds
of pain ;
Unlocks no prison, and unclasps no
chain ;
His heart is like the rock where sun
nor dew
Can rear one plant or flower of
heavenly hue.
No thought of mercy there may have
its birth,
For helpless misery or suffering worth.
The end of all his life is paltry pelf,
And all his thoughts are centred on—
himself ;
The wretch of both worlds ; for so
mean a sum,
First starved in this, then damned
in that to come."

(No. CCXL.)

A STRONG GOVERNMENT.

"A wise king scattereth the wicked,
and bringeth the wheel over them."
—Prov. xx. 26.

"Mercy and truth preserve the
king ; and his throne is upholden by
mercy."—Prov. xx. 28.

THESE two verses indicate the

elements of a strong human
government, and these are
severity, truth, and mercy.

I. SEVERITY. "A wise king
scattereth the wicked, and
bringeth the wheel over them."
The allusion is here to the way
of threshing in the East. One
mode was by a wain, which had
wheels with iron teeth like a saw.
The axle was armed with ser-
rated *wheels* throughout. It
moved upon three rollers, armed
with iron teeth, or wheels, to
cut the straw. The figure con-
veys two ideas. First. *Separation*.
The old agricultural wheel
cut the straw, and separated the
chaff from the wheat. The
policy of a good government
must ever be not only to separate
the wicked from the true and
virtuous citizen, but to separate
the wicked from one another,
and thus prevent them leagu-
ing together for spoliation and re-
bellion. Secondly. *Disablement*.
"Bringeth a wheel over them."
This does not necessarily mean
the destruction of their lives
(we question the right of human
government to take away life),
but the crushing of the rebel-
lious power, and disabling them
from working out their lawless
and dangerous aims. Now, it
is to be observed, that it is
against the "*wicked*" that these
severities are to be employed.
Not against the reformer of
public abuses, or the believer
in unpopular creeds ; but the
wicked, those whose hearts were
not only out of sympathy with
the laws of God and man, but
who are in direct antagonism
to all that is morally and po-
litically right.

II. TRUTH. "Mercy and
truth." A good government
should be true. First: *In its
legislation*. Its laws should be

in harmony with eternal facts. They should agree with the claims of God, and with the rights of universal man. A government that is not true in its laws, is not sound and cannot long stand. Secondly. *In its administration.* It must be truthful in all the operations of its executive. There must be no respect of persons. Similar transgressors must meet with similar penalties. Thus there must be reality in all. The king must not be pusillanimous, truculent, or changeable; he must be firm as granite, inexorable as justice.

III. MERCY. "*Mercy and truth.*" Mercy shall be the genius of all. Mercy should temper severity and mellow truth. The severity should be merciful; the truth should be merciful. The whole government should be shaped and worked in order to prevent possible and remove existing misery. Where there is not this *mercy* the government

will not be strong. The throne of a tyrant may be maintained in temporary stability by the force of terror, by the dread of civil or military executions. He may surround his throne by the myrmidons of his power; he may prolong his reign by fear; but after all his is power that hangs upon a breath. All tremble to give expression to the feeling which yet universally prevails—the feeling of discontent—of alienation—of rebellion. One sentence may be enough to wake the thunders of a general rebellion. The utterance is responded to from every corner of the land, the spell is broken; every eye flashes the long-suppressed resentment; every lip quivers in giving vent to the pent-up murmurings; man, woman, and child are on the alert; hands are joined; conspiracies are formed; weapons are brandished; the tyrant is hurled from his throne."

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

THE ORIGIN OF THE WORD BISHOP.

It is a remarkable fact, the full significance of which has only lately been appreciated, that neither Bosio, Fabretti, Boldetti, nor any other of the ancient explorers of subterranean Rome, ever found an inscription bearing the title of Bishop. It is true, indeed, that in the first age this title had not acquired that determinate ecclesiastical sense which it subsequently received. The

word had been in use among the Pagans in a wider and more general signification. Among the Greeks, for example, it was used for the president of the athletic sports and public games, and this may have been a sufficient reason, perhaps, for omitting the title on the grave-stones of the first bishops. By the middle of the third century, however, its ecclesiastical sense was well defined, and accordingly we find it here on three out of

these four grave-stones of the Popes. The tomb-stones of St. Cornelius, also, and of St. Eusebius, popes, and martyrs, which we shall presently see in this cemetery, are similarly marked; and in the cemetery of St. Alexander, discovered fifteen or twenty years ago on the Via Nomentana, at least three epitaphs display the same title. The fact that so many have been found in the same place, whereas they have not been found elsewhere, might suggest to an intelligent student of archæology that perhaps it was the practice in the ancient Church to reserve some special place of burial for those who had filled the highest rank in her hierarchy. And this conjecture receives strong confirmation from the fact, which we learn from various sources, that the earliest successors of St. Peter (with a very few exceptions, which can generally be accounted for) lay buried each in his own sepulchre, "near the body of blessed Peter in the Vatican," just as the bishops of Alexandria were buried near the body of St. Mark. Moreover, it was an object of great jealousy to the several Churches that their bishops should be buried in the midst of them; their tombs were appealed to as a testimony to the apostolic tradition and doctrine having come to them through a legitimate succession of bishops. Thus Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, writing to St. Victor, carefully enumerates the burial-places in different cities of Asia of the several bishops, "great pillars of the Church," as he calls them, whom he alleges as witnesses in his behalf. Caius, in like manner, disputing against the Cataphry-

gians at the end of the second century, appeals to the tombs of Sts. Peter and Paul; so, also, Optatus in his controversy with the Donatists. Hence, if a bishop happened to die at a distance from his own see, his body was ordinarily brought home, even at considerable inconvenience; e.g., the body of St. Eusebius from Sicily; of St. Cornelius, from Civita Vecchia; and of St. Pontianus, from the island of Sardinia. The bodies of all these Popes were brought back to Rome, though two of them at least had died in exile; for the law distinctly allowed the bodies of exiles to be brought home for interment, provided the Emperor's leave had been first obtained, and in the instances here alleged the translation was not made until a change in the imperial policy towards the Church made it possible to obtain such leave. Nor was this translation an honour peculiar to the bodies of deceased Roman Pontiffs. On the contrary, the relics of St. Ignatius were restored to Antioch; the body of Dionysius, Bishop of Milan, was recovered by St. Ambrose, and that of St. Felix, Bishop of Tiburtium, martyred at Venosa, was returned to Africa. Perhaps, also, this practice furnishes the best explanation which can be given of the attempt made by the Christians of the East to recover the bodies of Sts. Peter and Paul.—*Roma Sotterranea.*

THE ILIAD AND THE ODYSSEY.

OF the two poems it seems to me that, while both are wonderful, the Iliad is without doubt the greater. The plot of the Iliad, we shall find, is a marvellous combination of

poetical skill with national spirit and practical prudence. The plot of the *Odyssey*, at first sight more organized and symmetrical, is in the first place of far easier construction, and in the second, is wound up in a manner which is feeble if not slovenly. The suspicions of the genuineness of the Twenty-fourth Book appear to me on the whole to be tolerably met by a general conformity of turn and handling, though with diminished force; and by many minute particulars of correspondence which, here as elsewhere, the text supplies. But they have perhaps been reasonably suggested by a perceptible inferiority of workmanship in this and, with some exceptions, in several Books preceding it. The vigour of the *Iliad*, on the other hand, continues quite unabated to the end. Again, in the *Odyssey* there is not a mere decline of vigour; the plan of the ending may be called degenerate and incomplete. The ends of some of the threads are dropped. If ever a peace was patched it is that which is announced in the closing passage. The intervention of Mentor, even though his exterior conceals a deity, is not what the dignity

of the sovereign or the grandeur of *Odysseus* would require. And the unexplained as well as unfulfilled prophecy of the war, suggests that Homer had poetical intentions to which it was not permitted him to give effect. Generally speaking, the *Odyssey* displays the same powers as the *Iliad*, but in less energetic manifestation. A faculty of debate, never surpassed if ever equalled in human history, is found in both; but though the flight of *Odysseus* in the Seventh *Odyssey* is, like that of the contention in the First *Iliad*, a lofty one, it cannot be compared with the wonderful speech of *Achilles* in the tent-scene of the Ninth. Again, no man but Homer could have reproduced in the *Odyssey* to the life the characters of the *Iliad*, or could have added the specific shading of their altered circumstances. But though Homer in each is stronger than any other of the ancients, yet Homer of the *Iliad* is Homer at the height and maximum of his power in this transcendent quality; while in the *Odyssey* the great luminary seems to have just begun his descending course.—*Juventus Mundi*, by W. E. Gladstone, published by Macmillan and Co.

Notes on New Books.

BY A BARRISTER.

The Odes and Epodes of Horace, with a metrical translation into English, an introduction, commentaries, and the Latin text, by Lord Lytton, are published by Messrs. Blackwood and Son.

There is a new edition in one volume, partly re-written, of Mr. George Henry Lewes's *Life of Goethe*, published by Messrs. Smith, Elder, and Co.

Mrs. Oliphant gives us, in two volumes, *Historical Sketches of the Reign of George II.*, originally published in Blackwood's Magazine. (Blackwood and Sons.)

Opinions of Eminent Literary Men, compiled by Mr. John Timbs, are published in one volume, by Messrs. Sampson Low and Co.

Lives of Eminent Serjeants-at-Law, in two volumes, are published by Messrs. W. M. H. Allen and Co., being written by Mr. Serjeant Woolrych.

From a new collation of the contemporary chronicles, Mr. Thomas Cobbe, barrister-at-law, gives us *The History of the Norman Kings*: (Longmans.)

The Autobiography of Flora Macdonald, the preserver of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, edited by her Grand-daughter, is published by Messrs. Simpkin, Marshall and Co.

Mr. J. Nicholls, the Bristol City Librarian, publishes (Low and Co.), *his Remarkable Life, Adventures, and Discoveries of Sebastian Cabot, of Bristol*, the founder of Great Britain's maritime power, discoverer of America, and its first colonizer.

The Parliamentary Buff Book is published by Mr. Effingham Wilson. It is an analysis by Mr. Thomas Nicolls Roberts, of the divisions of the House of Commons during the sessions of 1866-67-68, comprising the whole of the ninth and last Parliament elected under the Reform Act of 1832.

The powerful speech delivered by the Bishop of St. David's on *The Irish Church* in the House of Lords, on the 15th of June, 1869, has been published by Mr. Ridgway.

Mr. T. Hughes, M.P., edits *The Trades Unions of England*, by M. le Comte de Paris. The work is translated by Mr. M. J. Senior, M.A., and published by Messrs. Smith, Elder and Co.

Essays of a Birmingham Manufacturer (Williams and Norgate) are five instructive essays by Mr. William Lucas Sargant, of which may be mentioned those on Sir Samuel Bentham; Ireland and the Tenure of Land; Limited Democracy; and Characteristics of Manufacturers.

New Tracts in North America is a journal of travel and adventure, by Mr. William A. Bell, M.A., M.B., who was engaged in the survey for a Southern railroad to the Pacific Ocean during 1867-8. The two volumes, which are published by Messrs. Chapman and Hall, are embellished with twenty chromos and numerous woodcuts.

Messrs. Rivingtons publish a compendious and complete little volume, lucidly arranged under twelve headings, by the Rev. J. H. Blunt, M.A., being *A Key to the Knowledge of Ancient Church History*.

The Four Lectures which were delivered recently at the Royal Institution of Great Britain, by the Rev. F. W. Farrar, M.A., F.R.S., are published by Messrs. Longmans, and entitled *Families of Speech*.

Translated from the French, Messrs. Chapman and Hall issue eight eloquent Discourses, delivered in the church of Notre Dame by the Rev. Père Lacordaire, on *Jesus Christ*.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

SERMONS PREACHED IN MANCHESTER. By ALEXANDER MACLAREN.
London: Macmillan and Co.

THIS book contains nineteen sermons, the subjects of which are—The Two Awakenings; The Heavenly Workers and the Earthly Watchers; Memory, Hope, and Work; Love's Triumph Over Sin; Transformation by Beholding; David's Cry for Pardon; David's Cry for Purity; Joseph's Faith; The Seven Stars and the Seven Candlesticks; Manhood Crowned in Jesus; Perpetual Youth; What Makes a Christian; Circumcision or Faith? The Baptism in Fire; The Secret of Tranquillity; The Song of the Builders; The Bed by the Wayside; The Power of Feeble Faith; The Priest of the World and King of Men; No More Sea. The author of this volume is, we are told, considered the ablest preacher in the Baptist denomination. This may be so. He is evidently a Baptist, for one of his leading divisions on the text, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire," is, "Christ plunges us into His divine fire," and everywhere does he speak of baptism as a plunging. His sermons are by no means ordinary productions. They are in thought, spirit, illustration, and style, far above the common run of pulpit discourses. They belong to the same class as those of Dr. Huntingdon and Ker, and are superior to them in some respects. This is saying a great deal. Heartily do we rejoice that there are here and there, in our large towns and cities, preachers like Mr. Maclaren, who are capable of giving such a representation of Christianity as can command the respect of the most intellectual of all types of thought, and minister to the general necessities of human souls in a world of ignorance, intricacies, and toil. We subjoin the following extract as the closing paragraph of the volume:—"The wicked is like the troubled sea which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.' That restless, profitless working of the great, homeless, hungry, moaning ocean, what a picture it is of the heart of a man that has no Christ, that has no God, that has no peace by pardon! A soul all tossed with its own boiling passion—a soul across which works and brings forth nothing but foam and mire! Unrest, perpetual unrest, is the lot of every man that is not of God's child. Some of you know that. Well, then, think of one picture. A little bark pitching in the night, and one figure rises quietly up in the stern, and puts out a rebuking hand, and speaks one mighty word, 'Peace! be still.' And the word was heard amid all the hurly-burly of

the tempest, and the waves crouched at his feet like dogs to their master. It is no fancy, brethren, it is a truth. Let Christ speak to your hearts, and there is peace and quietness. And if He do that, then your experience will be like that described in the grand old Psalm, 'Though the waters roar, and be troubled, and though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof, yet will we not fear,' for the city stands fast in spite of the waves that curl round its lowest foundations. Death, death itself will be but the last burst of the expiring storm, the last blast of the blown-out tempest. And there, the quiet of the green inland valleys of our Father's land, where no tempest comes any more, nor the loud winds are ever heard, nor the salt sea is ever seen, but perpetual calm and blessedness; all mystery gone, and all rebellion hushed and silenced, and all unrest at an end for ever! 'No more sea,' but instead of that wild and yeasty chaos of turbulent waters, there shall be 'the river that makes glad the city of God,' the river of water of life, that 'proceeds out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.'"

SERMONS PREACHED IN THE CHAPEL OF HARROW SCHOOL. By the Rev. H. MONTAGUE BUTLER, D.D. London: Macmillan and Co; Harrow: Crossley and Clarke.

HERE are forty short sermons on important subjects delivered to school-boys. Blessed are the boys who have such a religious teacher as Dr. Butler. In every discourse he puts himself in close and loving contact with the spiritual nature of his hearers, and infuses sentiments of the most quickening and ennobling character. We subjoin the following specimen:—"It was my privilege a few months back to hear a great foreign preacher in the French Metropolitan Cathedral reminding an audience of many thousands that every nation had a 'soul,' and that according to the soundness or unsoundness of that national 'soul' was the true prosperity or degradation of the people. So with a great society like our own, if it is petty when compared with the individuals who compose it. This school of ours has its 'soul.' It has its higher life, its moral life, its spiritual life, which, like the life of each one of its children, may be either stifled or developed. In all reverence and solemnity, I ask, 'What shall it profit it, if it shall gain the whole world and lose its own soul.' Do you believe in this 'soul' of the school, this its higher life? Have you lived for it while here? Have you worked for it? Have you prayed for it? What is your idea of the life of the school? What are the signs of it? Gentlemanly behaviour? Yes. Is there anything more? Manliness. I might well pause to ask you what you mean by manliness; and you would be startled to find how much you were deceived by mere show; how much genuine manliness you had ignored, and how much pretensions and make-believe manliness you had blindly idolized. But let that pass. Define it as we may, manliness in some form is a true sign of public life. If it does in any degree distinguish the school, we are indeed happy. There is something of the higher life here. But still I would ask, is there anything more? Kindly feeling, many of you would say, thinking

gratefully of friendships here formed, never, you trust, to be divided. Others would say vigour, and would mean by the term, if they were honest, success in games. Others would say public spirit, a consciousness of belonging to a body greater than ourselves and having common interests. But once again, behind all these treasures, which we cherish so loyally, one must still press the question, Is there nothing more? 'What shall it profit?' This is not the 'soul.' Surely if this is the higher life, it is not very high."

THE EARLY YEARS OF CHRISTIANITY. By E. DE PRESSENSE, D.D.
Translated by ANNIE HARWOOD. London: Hodder and Stoughton,
27, Paternoster-row.

THERE is no topic of the day more important for general study than the early history of Christianity and the planting of apostolic churches. Few men in Europe are more qualified to inspire and direct the minds of men to a knowledge of this subject than the author of this volume. He is well known as a Biblical scholar, a man of great literary genius, and thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Christianity. This volume is divided into three books, the first treats of The First Period of Apostolic Age from Pentecost to the Council at Jerusalem, A.D. 30—50; the second, The Apostolic Church up to the Death of St. Paul, A.D. 50—65; the third, the Period of St. John or the close of the Apostolic age. The work is a translation, but so perfectly accomplished as to be undetected by the style. Heartily do we recommend this work to all our readers. The subject is next in importance to the biography of Christ Himself.

SERMONS BY EMINENT PREACHERS, ON FRANCE, GERMANY, HOLLAND, AND SWITZERLAND. London: R. D. Dickinson, 92, Farringdon Street.

HERE are thirty-three discourses by foreign preachers of different countries. Here Eug. Bertier, H. Monod, Dr. C. E. Luthardt, F. F. Van Oosterzee, D.D., Dr. Gautzen, Dr. J. H. Grandpierre, Dr. J. H. Merle D'Aubigné, Dr. Krummacher, Dr. Tholuck, Dr. Pressensé, A. Knapp, U. Hofacker, Dr. C. A. Torere, Dr. Claus Harms, preach to us Britishers. This is an immense advantage. It enables us to judge of the foreign pulpit, and to see wherein it differs from the pulpit of this country. Looking carefully through these sermons, we conscientiously think that the ablest are not superior to our best preachers, either in methods of reaching the meaning of the Divine word or their power of presenting it. There is often a haziness of thought, a metaphysical refinement, and a simpering sentimentality which, though manifestly imitated by some of our "would be" intellectual preachers, are to the eye of the true thinker the author's obvious blemishes, and detract not a little from pulpit naturalness and power.

CREDO. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.

THIS volume is devoted to many of the inquiries which agitate many of the thoughtful religionists of our times. It is divided into four sections

entitled, supernatural books, supernatural beings, supernatural life, and supernatural destiny. Whilst there is a hurriedness of movement, and a flippancy of expression which are regrettable in such a work as this, there is much that is exceedingly valuable. The author is, unquestionably, a man of shrewd observation, extensive reading, and independent thought. His style is remarkably clear. There is not a hazy sentence. There is pith and point everywhere. With a few sentences he often scatters masses of sceptical nebulosities.

THE PÆDOBAPTIST'S GUIDE ON MODE AND SUBJECT AND BAPTISMAL REGENERATION. By JOHN GUTHRIE, M.A. London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co.; Glasgow; Thomas D. Morrison.

SOMEHOW or other we have never been able to feel any interest in the old controversy which divides the Baptist denomination from nearly all the Christian sects in Christendom. They may be ritualistically right or otherwise. Our interest in such ritualism is *nil*. The little work before us is in every way a model in the way of controversy. Whilst the author's convictions are evidently strong, whether well grounded or not, we don't declare he has not a particle of that exclusiveness and acrimony which generally characterise such discussions. It is an honour to fight with such a man. If he sends us reeling to the ground, he does it with a loving smile and magnanimous bearing. Whether he leaves us sprawling on the banks of the river, or crippled at the pedestal of the font, we cannot possibly be angry with him.

HALF-HOUR WITH THE STARS. A Plain and Easy Guide to the Knowledge of the Constellations. True for every year. By RICHARD A. PROCTOR, B.A., F.R.A.S. London: Robert Hardwicke, 192, Piccadilly.

THIS book shows in twelve maps the portion of the principal star-groups night after night throughout the year, with introduction, and a separate explanation on each map. There are no objects in the material universe, the study of which has a more quickening and elevating power upon the mind than that of the stellar heavens, and the work before us is incomparably the best that we have ever seen to interest and aid the youngest mind in this delightful employment.

THE SCIENCE OF ARITHMETIC: A Systematic Course of Numerical Reasoning and Computation. By JAMES CORNWALL, Ph.D., and JOSHUA G. FITCH, M.A. London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co., Stationers' Hall, Court.

THIS book not only differs from others of a similar title in many important respects, but is incomparably superior to any other with which we are acquainted. It is too well-known either to require a minute description or a strong recommendation. Dr. Cornwall and Mr. Fitch in producing a work of this kind are public benefactors, and have gained a name that will go down with honour to posterity. "The Science of Arithmetic" in intrinsic excellence is so far in advance of the educational books of the age that it is not likely to be superseded for generations yet.



A HOMILY

ON

The Miracles of Jesus Christ.

“Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him; and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.”—John xi. 47, 48.



BELIEF in miracles cannot be said to have made any severe tax upon the generations that have lived and died. From the youth of the world down to these days of its stalwart manhood, neither a Hercules, nor a Vishnu, nor a Joan of Arc have found much difficulty in establishing their claims.

From the heroes of antiquity, the saints of the middle ages, and from the priests of not a few religions, miracles have been looked for, and accepted as a matter of course. It was not more believed in Greece and Rome that the inhabitants of Olympus were wonder-workers, than that they often made their favourites so. In the middle ages, the saints not only wrought miracles in life, but their very relics, bones, and graves, became invested with healing power. The founders and priests of religions have scarcely had to make the claim; they have been

invested with superhuman capacities by the popular consent. The manhood of the world has not outgrown its earlier beliefs in the possibility of miracles. The Church of Rome makes greater claims for her saints than they made for themselves, and men of education and science are amongst the millions who own them. From Joanna Southcott to Edward Irving there is a distance far vaster than time can measure, but they both proved how hungry still was the soul for supernatural wonders. The Church can scarcely be laughed at by those who remain outside her pale. The possible miracles of St. Giles's and Bethnal Green, are scarcely more astounding than those of Mayfair and Belgravia, or those of Mayfair and Belgravia than those of Oxford and Cambridge. Jugglers less expert than many in India are accepted not only by lords and ladies, and by the untaught crowd, but by men of letters and intellect, as the agents by whom the unseen world is acting on the present. Such insolent pretenders may be exposed, but the belief in such possibilities remains, and is yet indulging and gratifying itself in some other form. All this indicates superstition, but does the other extreme where miracles are laughed to scorn, even though they are the miracles of Jesus Christ, involve no prejudice?

It is certain both that the Jews believed in miracles, and that at the hands of their Messiah they expected them. It was the ease and frequency with which Jesus wrought them, that made his claims so damaging to his foes. They were credentials on His behalf for which there was no answer.

Certainly, if Jesus did work the marvels attributed to Him he was no mere man, and something more than a prophet sent from God. For He did not work them as the prophets and apostles did. The Great Lawgiver, whether he stretched his rod over the sea till it divided, or smote the rock till it became a fountain of water for the thirsty, is self-evidently but an instrument in the hands of Omnipotence. Elijah and the Prophets as obviously acted, not with in-

herent power, but as altogether dependent upon the Lord of Hosts. The Apostles shrank back in horror if the homage excited by the wonder they worked was given to them. From the least to the greatest they owned themselves but the servants of Jesus of Nazareth. But it was altogether different with Him to whom Moses and the Prophets bore witness, and whom the Apostles owned as their Lord and Master. On several occasions indeed there is fellowship with the Father before the miracle is worked, but this is not to obtain the power, for the work has previously been undertaken, and the assurance that the dead will be raised is as great before as after the prayer. A craving for communion with the Father, and of desire for His glory, Jesus is constantly suggesting, but never dependence.

The miracles draw attention to Himself; nor does He even once repudiate the homage which the mighty acts inspire.

I. One of the subtlest, though not one of the latest arguments against miracles, is Hume's. It is that testimony cannot be regarded as an adequate ground for belief in them. Testimony, it is contended, rests entirely on experience—in other words, that we only believe testimony in so far as experience has taught us its agreement with the thing testified. There are two kinds of evidence, we are reminded, the one being based on uniform, and the other on variable experience; the one therefore being infallible, but the other fallible, and therefore susceptible of degrees. Suppose then a case in which we have two different experiences leading to opposite conclusions, and that one experience is as uniform as the other, each is sufficient to neutralize the other, and therefore we can receive neither. But suppose that both are variable and in different degrees, we must evidently receive the more uniform of the two. Much more if one is perfectly uniform and the other variable, must we receive the uniform. Now apply this to miracles, says Hume, and there is an argument against them, for they are contrary to

our uniform experience, and the testimony at best is founded on a very variable experience.

Hume's argument, in some form or other, has occurred to almost all thinking minds. But it will not be hard to show that it is based on a fallacy. For it is not true that testimony is so utterly founded on experience. It would be more correct to say, that it depends for our acceptance on the veracity and capacity of the testator—upon our experience of the truthfulness of his character, and his fitness to give evidence. For instance, not long ago, a rumour went through the land, that the Island of Tortola, with thousands of human beings, had been suddenly submerged beneath the waves. Such a catastrophe was unknown; most assuredly it was opposed to our uniform experience. Very common may such a physical phenomenon have been once in the world's history, but since the globe has been tenanted by the human race, such an event had against it an invariable experience. For this was not to be associated with an ordinary earthquake or convulsion. But now, was it rejected? Some of the leading journals accepted the intelligence as embodying a fact at once, and those which suspended judgment, did so only till the news was authenticated. And do intelligent men repudiate the testimony of the great discoverers in astronomy and natural science, or the experimentalists in chemistry and electricity, until they have had the evidence of the senses? We hear from the lips of such men as the Herschels, and Faradays, and Liebig's, statements for which there is no experience whatever, and which almost seem fabulous—but do we therefore ignore them? We have but to stand beside the student in his laboratory, or the astronomer on his watch-tower, or the geologist in his museum, and we are told of wonders which are not only contrary to our own experience, but to the experience of the ages, but do we therefore discredit them? We sit and listen as we get the result of investigations by the telescope, or microscope, or spectrum analysis, or elaborate mathe-

matical calculations, with belief as implicit as though already we had the experience for ourselves. Testimony may then be of a kind to dispense with experience. And such is the testimony of the miracles of Jesus Christ. For it is the testimony, let it be remembered, not of one man, but of several. Moreover, it is the testimony of men who either themselves were eye-witnesses of the wonders, or had the facts from those who were. Further, they were not in concert in recording the miracles, for there are chronological differences and discrepancies quite sufficient to prove that there was, and could be, no approach to collusion of any kind. Again, there is proof that the testimony was according to their honest convictions, for in bearing it they had much to lose and to suffer, and nothing to gain. And, once more, they are men for whose testimony there is the proof of brave, noble, and truth-loving lives. On behalf of such a testimony, is there not a uniform experience? Unless it is taken by us seriously into account, there is surely no testimony in all the range of history which deserves it. One man might have been deceived in supposing that he saw miracles. Suppose several witnesses—but if in bearing the testimony they had anything to gain, they might be mere impostors, or honest men self-deceived. Or if the general tenor of their lives was unworthy, we might discredit the miracles. Or if they were stated in precisely the same order, and with an evident desire that each testator should be in perfect harmony with the others, there might be ground for suspicion; but that precisely the reverse of all this should be the case—in other words, that there should be all the conditions of true history, and yet that the testimony should be utterly false, has opposed to it an experience of testimony all but uniform, and therefore all but infallible.

II. Let us now look at the mythic interpretation of the miracles.

The miracles are resolved into myths, because it is said

there are chronological differences and discrepancies which otherwise cannot be reconciled ; because the Gospels were not written by eye-witnesses, and must have been compiled from an oral Gospel ; and because myths were very likely to crop up in Judea and Galilee, as pure history was as yet unknown among the Jews.

But, now as I have already hinted, discrepancies may be just of the kind to give authenticity, and to prove true history. And this is just the kind of discrepancy which exists in the Gospels. Nor could there be an assumption more at variance with the evidence, than the assumption that the Gospels were not written by the immediate followers of Christ. There is not a trace of evidence in any of the Gospels to bear out such a theory. Nay, the evidence could scarcely be stronger to prove that they are written by the men whose names they bear, and that these men had been the disciples of Jesus. Only think of the unhesitating confidence with which they relate facts and circumstances ; of the occasionally life-like portraits they draw of the scenes amidst which Jesus moved ; of the perfect knowledge of the Messiah and his movements which they indicate ; of the ease and naturalness of the narratives ; of the evidently undesigned, because unforced manner in which they assume themselves to have been friends of Jesus ; and of the frequency with which detail is recalled, and yet never having accorded to it undue prominence ; and before you can decide against the Gospels being written by immediate followers of Jesus, you must pass a verdict in the face of evidence on their behalf as conclusive and ample as documents can furnish. Nor by the time that the Gospels were written was it possible that such a luxuriant crop of myths should come into existence as this theory assumes. For that even the last of the Gospels was in existence before the close of the first century, admits of no reasonable doubt, so evidently are they referred to, and quoted in substance by the Fathers. Strauss himself seems to feel the force of this argument.

And hence, he says, that expectations had been formed of the Messiah, of the nature of the Gospel narratives, and, therefore, that it only remained to refer these expectations to Jesus. But if Jesus disappointed the expectation formed of Him, what is so unlikely as that, whilst the memory of His life was yet so young, it should be wreathed with such a halo of glory? Such a theory, moreover, requires us either to believe that the writers were unscrupulous, and designed deception, or that they wrote under the influence of a diseased mind, or a failing memory, or that they had never been intimately acquainted with the life of Jesus—for only on one or other of these suppositions was it possible for them to attribute to Him what never belonged to Him. But, as we have seen, it is just the reverse of all this that the Gospels indicate. And then there is the evidence of the alleged miracles themselves. They neither read like myths, nor do they suggest such thoughts as myths suggest. They are free from all the ludicrous and incongruous elements with which the myths of all nations and ages are associated. Which of them provokes a smile? Levity has laughed at them, but it needs levity to do it. They are solemn, impressive, and soul-awing. Philosophers, and men accustomed to sift evidence at the bar, and in the senate, have felt them to be so, as well as the unlettered and unsophisticated. They are surely strange myths that the light of civilisation has for ages been shining on, and yet that are accepted so reverently by such countless crowds, and that are still read in cathedral and cottage, distinguished for nothing so much as for creating reverence, and devotion, and confidence in God. These, at least, are myths, the like to which have never been, and can never be looked for again. As the darkness of Heathendom passes away, and long before the light that floods around us, illumines it, the myths incorporated with the superstitions of the world are abandoned—these remain. We often enough, indeed, hear that they are doomed, and it is no insignificant testing that they have to endure, but the

tempest that passes over them only roots them more firmly, almost wherever they had a hold.

III. But let us see what the scientific objection amounts to.

We are reminded that the inductive philosophy has established the universal order, and the unfailing constancy of the laws of nature. But this is no argument against miracles whatever; it is simply an argument against a theory of miracles. For the Bible never represents the miracles as being in antagonism with the order of nature, or the constancy of her laws; nor are we shut up by any necessity to such a creed. Not a few of the staunchest believers in miracles hold that in no case are they in opposition to the established order of things, and that in all cases they are simply the working of recondite laws, and almost all believers in miracles hold that so far from being an interruption of, or breaking in upon God's plan, they are a primal part of it. And, moreover, who is to say what is in harmony with the order of nature, and what is not? What is the history of science and philosophy, but a revelation that the order of nature is wider and more intricate than man could have conceived? And what is the progress of science and philosophy, but man altering and widening preconceived theories about the order of nature and the constancy of her laws? Since men first began to observe, discoveries have been catalogued for which a cramped and capricious system of nature's order could have had no room whatever. Suppose that we saw an eclipse of the sun for the first time, or experienced the first earthquake, would not such phenomena appear quite as irreconcilable with the order of nature as the miracles? If we show as much courtesy to the miracles, we shall acknowledge them to be a part of the same order. Before science makes good her claim to laugh at the miracles, she must know what the laws of nature are. With all the spoils that lay at her feet, she has only the proof that her conquests are begun. When she can lift

her brow amid the universe unbaffled and unperplexed, then we will give her the crown of lordship, and the judicial throne from which to pronounce on such questions as this. But that time has not come yet. Even the comets, that for ages have been bursting upon her view, and shaking their fiery tresses, as with lightning speed they track their course she has only begun to harmonize with law and order; and what account has she been able to give of the meteoric showers that not long ago startled our midnights? Just of the nature to remind us that there are phenomena which she is compelled to assume are in harmony with nature's order, and to assume it without a vestige of proof.

IV. Not many words need be spent on M. Rénan's account of the miracles.

M. Rénan often pays a tribute to the character of Jesus than which nothing could seem heartier. But in explanation of the miracles, he takes a stand, which, if true, would for ever rob the character of Jesus of all the glory that attaches to it, and leave it fit only to be forgotten. For Jesus was now and then a Thaumaturgus, practising tricks, and employing frauds to get credit for the Messiahship. Renan admits that Jesus did not wish to deceive; that He even shrank from it, and only resorted to false means at the persuasion of friends, and because miracles being expected at the hands of the Messiah, there was no other way by which he could get accepted. Look at his explanation of the raising of Lazarus. Lazarus professed to be dead; Martha and Mary were in collusion with Lazarus, and hence the result. It is owned that Jesus was not beforehand a party to the deception, but he acquiesced in the apparent miracle. Anything less supported by fact, and in all respects more shallow, it is hard to imagine. For it is in opposition, in flagrant, violent, and utter opposition to all that we know of Jesus. However hard it may be for us sometimes to grasp the reality of the miracles, is it not easier

to believe them all, nay, a million times easier, than to believe that Jesus could do what is so mean, so paltry, so ignoble, and so base? For who has words to paint the blackness that deliberately professes to be the interpreter of Heaven, the anointed of God, the expected Messiah, and the hope of the world, when he knows that he is only an ambitious adventurer?

I would add, as corroborative and confirmatory on the side of the miracles:—

First: They are precisely such as we can conceive the Son of God performing. They are fraught with solemn, earnest teaching both about God and duty. With the exception of the withering of the fig tree, and the destruction of the swine, they are miracles of compassion, of tenderness, and love. They all indicate power, but not one of them suggests lawless, capricious, or tyrannical power. Try to imagine a God-man in this world, and tell us what wonders he could work so worthy of him as the miracles wrought by Jesus. Surely there is something altogether Divine in the healing of the sick, the feeding of the hungry, the rescue of the drowning, and the giving back to the desolate widow her dead son. So Divine, that we bow to Him who works them instinctively; they crown Him with many crowns.

Secondly: They are in perfect harmony with all the teaching of the New Testament respecting Jesus. If the Christian records introduced us to Christ as an ordinary man, or even as an extraordinary being, though conditioned as mortals must be, there would be a strong presumption against miracles. They would come upon us as a shock, and as we stood aghast, we could scarcely help explaining them away. For the power they assume belongs not to man by virtue of his manhood, nor does genius wield the sceptre that can command them. But now what is the representation of Jesus? He comes to us from the bosom of the Father; He humbled Himself to become a man, the con-

sciousness of being separate from men never leaves Him, and though found in fashion as a man, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God.

Thirdly : They are in harmony with the life of Jesus, and quite as credible as it is. For that life stands alone. In its purity, in its unselfishness, in its tenderness, in its pity, in its moral grandeur, the life of Jesus is without a rival in any land, in any age. Experience is uniformly against the possibility of such a life ; and neither history nor philosophy have a clue to it. But who can doubt that it was lived ? We are told that there was a foundation for the portrait the evangelists painted ; that Jesus was a remarkable man, but that the Christ of the Gospels was by no means the Christ of history. The Christ of the Gospels lived only in the exaggerated memories of the evangelists. With time they lost sight of his failings, and they coloured his excellencies. Then let me say, that this involves a problem for which it is harder to find a solution than for the signs and wonders. For that men in all respects so inartistic, and imperfect, and unlettered, should be able to conceive of such a life, and with such consummate skill should give it naturalness and harmony, majesty, and repose, is a miracle indeed. That one man should do it is a miracle, but that several should do it, and yet that the portrait drawn by each should be a confirmation of the other, and never a dull copy, is the miracle of miracles, and compared to it the rocking to rest of the storm-tossed sea, and the awaking from their sleep the buried dead is easy to believe.

Preston.

H. J. MARTYN.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

OUR PURPOSE.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this TEHILIM, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character, and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) ANNOTATIONS of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The ARGUMENT of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The HOMILETICS of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately educed, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

SUBJECT: *The Prayer of a People for their Leader.*

“The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble ;
The name of the God of Jacob defend thee.
Send thee help from the sanctuary,
And strengthen thee out of Zion.
Remember all thy offerings,
And accept thy burnt sacrifice.
Grant thee according to thine own heart,
And fulfil all thy counsel.
We will rejoice in thy salvation,
And in the name of our God we will set up our banners :
The Lord fulfil all thy petitions.
Now know I that the Lord saveth His anointed ;
He will hear him from his holy heaven
With the saving strength of His right hand.
Some trust in chariots, and some in horses ;
But we will remember the name of the Lord our God.
They are brought down and fallen ;
But we are risen and stand upright.
Save, Lord ;
Let the king hear us when we call.”—Psa. xx.

HISTORY.—That David is the author of this Psalm there is no reason to doubt. It was written while the Ark was on Mount Zion, but the precise circumstance which led to its composition is not known. The king was about engaging in a conflict with some of those enemies of his country who “trusted in horses and chariots.” We have in this Psalm a relic of the ancient Liturgy, an Antiphonal Temple hymn of which the strophes are sung alternately by the assembled congregation. The importance attached by the religious feelings of the Hebrews to the preliminary offerings before battle appears from the scene at Gilgal, when the king risked the displeasure of the prophet sooner than enter on the battle without the usual prayers and sacrifice.” (*The Four Friends.*)

ANNOTATIONS.—“*To the chief musician.*” Written not for his personal use, but entrusted to him for its execution. It is not for the expression of his own personal feelings, but for the expression of the devout sentiment of all the good in the nation collectively.

Ver. 1.—“*The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble, the name of the God of Jacob defend thee.*” “The name of God” is the character of God as revealed in His words and works. “The God of Jacob” was the Father of the Israelites, and the expression means the “God of Israel.” “Defend thee.” Margin, “Set thee on high place.” The “high place”—a tower, a mountain, a lofty rock, such places were regarded as places of security.

Ver. 2.—“*Send thee help from the sanctuary.*” The “sanctuary” was the tabernacle on the holy place where God was worshipped, and where He was supposed to reside. (Exod. xxviii. 43; xxix. 30; xxxiv. 19; xxxix. 1.) This was supposed to be His seat, His throne, His dwelling place among the people. “*And strengthen thee out of Zion.*” Margin, “Support thee out of Zion.”

Ver. 3.—“*Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice.*” It was customary with the Israelites, when entering on a battle, to offer sacrifices to Jehovah. (See 1 Sam. xiii. 8, 9.) Both the *burnt sacrifice* and the *meat offering* are here mentioned as being presented. (Lev. i. 2.)

Ver. 4.—“*Grant thee according to thine own heart.*” According to thy wishes; according to the desires of thy heart,” “*And fulfil all thy counsel;*”—all that thou hast designed or undertaken in the matter; that is, May He enable thee to execute thy purpose!

Ver. 5.—“*We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the Lord fulfil all thy petitions.*”

Alexander translates thus: "May we rejoice in thy deliverance, and in the name of our God display a banner." Others have given it a more poetic rendering: "Let us rejoice in thy protection, and set up the name of our God on high; Jehovah will perform all thy petitions."

Ver. 6.—"Now know I that the Lord saveth His anointed; He will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of His right hand." The change here from the plural to the singular authorises the impression that it is the language of the king, his response to the earnest prayers of his people. He feels confident of success in his enterprise because the people have thus prayed for him. Many of our best expositors, however, do not regard this change to the first person in the singular as indicating a different speaker, but rather as representing the people who had prayed in the preceding verses as an ideal person in the singular. They who prayed in the plural here express their confidence of being heard as the language of one soul. We prefer, however, accepting the language as that of the king.

"Ver. 7.—"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses." This is understood to be a general chorus of the king and the people in the expression of their confidence in God. Chariots were used in ancient warfare. (See Judges i. 19; iv. 3, 14; Josh. xvii. 16; and occasionally by the Israelites; 1 Kings x. 26, 29; Isa. ii. 7.) "These chariots," says Kitto, "consisted of a light pole suspended between and on the withers of a pair of horses, the after end resting on a light axletree, with two low wheels. Upon the axle stood a light frame, open behind, and floored for the warrior and his charioteer, who both stood within. On the sides of the frame hung the war-bow, in its case, a large quiver with arrows and darts had commonly a particular sheath. In Persia the chariots, elevated upon wheels of considerable diameter, had four horses abreast; and in early ages there were occasionally hooks or scythes attached to the axles." "The contrast here," says Hengstenberg, "is between human means of help and the assistance of God. It indicates the difference between David and Goliath, 'Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield, but I come to thee in the name of the Lord God of Hosts.'"

Ver. 8.—"They are brought down and fallen; but we are risen, and stand upright." Who are brought down and fallen? Those who "trust in chariots and horses." The enemies of the king with whom he was about to wage war. The language expresses a certainty that they will be all vanquished.

Ver. 9.—"Save, Lord: let the King hear us when we call." The translation of the "Four Friends" gives, perhaps, the correct idea of this verse. "Oh, Jehovah, save the king! Oh, may He hear us when we cry." And their remark on it is good. "The change from the second to the third person is characteristic of the Hebrew manner of conquering emotion, and sinking into calmer language at the close of the poem."

ARGUMENT—Luther's remark, as to the purport of this Psalm is worth notice. "Almost all expound this Psalm as having reference to Christ; but I think such an exposition of it is rather too remote, and not sufficiently literal. Wherefore, I think the Psalm, in a more plain and simple sense, is a certain litany or holy supplication for magistrates and those who are placed in high stations, for whom the apostle (1 Tim. ii.) commands us 'first of all to pray, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life.' " The whole Psalm, throughout every particular part of it, tends to set forth this—that a prince of the people should presume upon no powers of his own, trust to no wealth, and rely on no human counsels. According to that of Psalm xxxiii. 16, 17, "There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. An horse is a vain thing to save a man; neither shall he deliver any by his great strength. But let him wait for help from heaven, and know that it is from heaven that all victory comes; let him hope in the Lord alone, and wrestle with him in prayer, like Moses of old."

The Psalm may be divided into three sections. The first, Embracing the prayer of the people for their king. The second, Embracing the exultant confidence which that prayer excited in the mind of the king. And the third, Embracing the chorus in which the king and the people joined.

HOMILETICS.—Homiletically, this Psalm gives three things—

I. THE PRAYER OF A PEOPLE ON BEHALF OF THEIR LEADER. They here pray for five things on his behalf.

First: *Protection amidst dangers.* "The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee." All true leaders of the people, political, social, and religious, are exposed to dangers. Their very mission in a depraved world brings them into antagonism with the prejudices, the indulgences, the habits, and the selfishness of

multitudes. Hence such enmity is often created that threatens not only their property and reputation, but their very lives. They need, therefore, Divine guardianship, and for this their true followers, as here, invoke the God of heaven. "The name of the God of Jacob defend thee." Set thee on high upon those rocky altitudes beyond the reach of human foe. They here pray for,

Secondly: *Support under trials.* "Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion." How often, under the sense of heavy responsibilities, and the pressure of the work, does the heart of the stoutest leader sink within him. Moses felt this when he exclaimed, "What shall I do unto this people?" So did Elijah, when he said, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life." Jeremiah also, when he exclaimed, "I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name." And Paul, when he cried, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Even Christ, the commander of all the true people on the earth, felt this, when He gave utterance to the words, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful." Hence the necessity of Divine succour and support from the very sanctuary of God. They here pray for,

Thirdly: *Acceptance in worship.* "Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice." Special offerings had, perhaps, just been made by the king to the God of heaven, preparatory to the war in which he was about to plunge. But what boots all our religious sacrifices and services unless the Great One condescends to approve and accept them? His approbation is what is wanted. Hence the intercession, "Remember all thy offerings," &c. (1 Sam. xiii. 8—13.) They here pray for,

Fourthly: *Realization of purpose.* "Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel." This implies (1.) Their belief that his wishes and purposes in the enterprise were right. (2.) That their realization would be of service to the commonwealth. We should always wish

well to those whose purposes are right and generous. God speed the true reformer, philanthropist, and preacher. They here pray for,

Fifthly: *Deliverance from enemies*. "We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners." The best expositors regard this verse also as a part of their prayer. Thus Hengstenberg renders the words, "May we rejoice over thy salvation, and through the name of our God be lifted up; the Lord fulfil all thy petitions." The idea is, "May we be permitted to rejoice in thy deliverance, and be exalted in thine enterprise."

Such is the prayer—a prayer suitable for all loyal subjects on behalf of a true king, and suitable also for all congregations on behalf of a true minister of the Gospel.

This Psalm gives :—

II. THE INFLUENCE OF THE PRAYER UPON THE HEART OF THE LEADER. "Now know I that the Lord saveth his anointed; He will hear him from His holy heaven, with the saving strength of His right hand." Supposing that this is the language of the king, which I think highly probable, it expresses his assurance that the prayers of the people on his behalf had been answered. He speaks with an undoubted certainty, "Now *know* I." How did he know it? He might have known it in two ways.

First: *By inference*. If he believed that the prayers of the people were *genuine* prayers, he could not but infer this. This he knew, this he often declared. Were their prayers now on his behalf *genuine*? He believed they were, and the inference came to him with an absolute certainty that they were already answered on his behalf—"Now know I," &c. He might have known it,

Secondly: *By inspiration*. I believe that apart from all study and all reasoning a true man often receives a *sentiment* which comes to him with all the power of absolute truth. He may not be able to explain how that sentiment came, or

to justify its doctrine by argument, still he holds it with all the tenacity of his soul. "Now know I," &c.

What strength this gives the Leader of a People! When the true minister of Christ knows not only that his people pray for him, but that their prayers are answered, it raises him to a grand elevation of soul, and endows him with an invincible purpose of usefulness.

This Psalm gives :—

III. THE RESULT OF THEIR PRAYER UPON THEMSELVES AND THEIR LEADER. "Some trust in chariots and some in horses. But we will remember the name of the Lord our God." This, as we have said, is supposed to be the language both of the leader and the people. Here their souls meet in one triumphant sentiment. These words suggest three facts :

First: *There is a trusting tendency in man.* From the dawn to the close of life we find men trusting, leaning with all the interests of their existence upon something outside themselves. This tendency springs from a deep and ineradicable sense of creatureship and dependency, and this the Creator has implanted in our nature.

Secondly: *This trusting tendency takes different directions in different men.* (1). In some it is directed to secondary instrumentalities. Some "trust in chariots and some in horses"—something besides God and infinitely inferior to God. We find this everywhere. The king trusts to his armies, the worldling to his wealth, the people to their priest. (2.) In some it is directed to the great First Cause. "We will remember the name of the Lord our God." He is the only right and safe object of implicit trust. No one else is able to bear us up. We have interests too weighty for worlds to sustain.

Thirdly: *Man's well-being depends upon the direction this tendency takes.* "They are brought down and fallen : but we are risen and stand upright." Those who rely implicitly upon secondary instrumentalities will always be found amongst

those who are brought down and fallen ; whilst those who trust on the great First Cause will always be found amongst those who have risen and stand upright. Luther's remark on this point is good. "At the commencement of the attack the ungodly indeed appear to stand firm, while they confide in their chariots and horsemen ; on the other hand the pious who trust in the name of the Lord, appear to them to be far from strong. But faith argues thus : although those stand, and we seem to be weak and to fall, yet we are sure of this, that presently shall matters be entirely reversed, and they shall fall ; but we shall be raised on high, and stand ; nay, we are already lifted up and stand erect." Truly, "it is better to trust in the Lord than put confidence in men ; it is better to trust in the Lord than put confidence in princes." "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help." "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that day his thoughts perish." Those who trust in the Lord shall one day sing an anthem of triumph sublimer than that which ransomed Israel thundered on the shores of the Red Sea. "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously ; the horse and his rider, Pharoah's chariot and his hosts hath he cast into the sea."

CONCLUSION.—Take this Psalm as a portraiture of the life of a true church and its minister. And then what have you ? In the first five verses you have the church on its knees before God, invoking the blessings of heaven upon him in his arduous and responsible undertakings. Then, in the sixth verse, you have the minister standing erect with an elevated assurance of the Divine favour, and with a consciousness of renewed energy for higher achievements, and, speaking in exulting monologue, "Now know I that the Lord saveth His anointed." And then, in the seventh and eighth verses, you have the church and the minister, having fulfilled their mission and vanquished all enemies, shouting, in one triumphant chorus, "Some trusts in chariots, some in horses," &c. God grant

that this portraiture, in all its lineaments, may be true to our experience as a church and pastor. Then, when our connection with earth has ceased, and the alternating sorrows and joys of this brief life are over, we shall meet and mingle with the great and good of all ages and lands, in those pure heavens of love, where God is the grand centre of all thoughts, and object of all loves.



Germ of Thought.

EMBLEMS OF SOUL WORK.—No. I.

SUBJECT: *Soul Agriculture.*

“Break up your fallow ground, and sow not amongst thorns.”—Jer. iv. 3.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Sixty-third.

THE material world is not only the creature and organ of the spiritual, but its emblematic representation. As the tabernacle of old was made after the “pattern of things seen on the Mount,” so all the objects of the visible universe are moulded according to those eternal principles that pervade the spiritual domain.

“What if earth
Be but the shadow of heaven, and things therein
Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?”

MILTON.

What are all the visible things but the embodiments and expressions of divine ideas? And are not these ideas the elements of spiritual life and blessedness in all worlds? It is the glory of man that he has an affinity for them, and hungers for them as for the bread of his being. His instinctive belief that they pervade the visible, underlie it as its substratal germ, stimulate all his scientific researches, and is the inspiration of all his loftiest poetry.

The Scripture everywhere views material nature in this aspect, and uses it as the medium to convey to man's intellect and heart the quickening thoughts of the great God. Christ, the greatest of all teachers, taught in parables. And what are parables, but material objects employed as vehicles of Divine thought? His parables are not mere illustrations of nature, they are often actual translations, literal interpretations of nature's inarticulate language.* So parabolic was the teaching of our Lord, that we are told "without a parable spake He not unto them." Constantly did he point his hearers to the palpable around him, and from the bright heavens, the blooming earth, and the rolling sea gather objects through which to convey the great truths of His spiritual kingdom.

No kind of teaching is so *attractive* to man as this. It opens the heart for the truth, by arresting the senses, exciting the imagination, and stirring the sympathies. It gives body to abstractions, it makes "the word flesh," and brings it within the common sensibilities and experiences of mankind. Truths coming thus to man are not only rendered most attractive, but most *rememberable* too. The parable, says a modern writer, like the float, keeps the truth from sinking; and like the feathers in an arrow, makes it strike; and like the barb, makes it stick.

In the series of discourses which I am now commencing, I purpose to avail myself of this method of teaching. I shall represent the *true* work which the soul has to do in this world by some of those physical departments of action which men occupy as denizens of this earth, such as *agriculture, architecture, accountancy, literature, merchandize, &c., &c.*

SOUL AGRICULTURE is our present subject. Numerous are the instances in which man's work in training his soul for a happy immortality is represented under the imagery of tillage.† Agriculture is not only the oldest, most necessary, and probably the best understood of all the arts of life, but also the most

* See "Benedicite," by C. Child, M.D., published by John Murray. Also "Bible Teachings in Nature." By the Rev. Hugh Macmillan. Published by Macmillan and Co. Also "Trench's Introduction to the Parables."

† Hosea x. 12; John iv. 36, Matt. xiii.; 1 Cor. iii. 6—8; Gal. vi. 7—10, &c.

strikingly illustrative of that work which of *all works* is the most important—the moral culture of the human soul.

There are three things essential to successful agriculture. Proper attention to the soil, the seed, and the season, and these three things we shall find to be equally essential to the successful cultivation of our spiritual natures.

I. Proper attention to the SOIL. There are at least two points of analogy between the material soil and the human soul worthy of note—Variety of condition and capability of improvement.

There is *variety of condition*. There are different kinds of material soil. Some are far more productive and more easy of tillage than others. The Great Teacher, in “the parable of the sower,” indicates this diversity. He speaks of the “way-side soil.” The soil that had been trodden down and made hard by the foot of travellers and the wheel of traffic. Through it the ploughshare had not been driven, and the glebe was too hard to receive into itself the precious grain; it rested on its surface for a little while, and then it was either crushed to powder or borne away by the fowls of heaven. He speaks of the “stony places”—the shallow soil. There was no depth of loam into which the seed could strike its little roots. It soon sprang up and as soon withered away. He speaks of the *thorny* soil, soil though deep and rich had not been cleaned. It was full of the roots of thorns and weeds. Hence whilst the seed cast into it grew, the thorns grew also and choked it. He speaks of the “good ground.” Where the seed took root, grew, and produced an abundant crop. He Himself explains the parable, and shows that these varied conditions of soil represent various conditions of human soul.

The other point of analogy between the material soil and the human soul is *capability of improvement*. The farmer changes the character of the soil, turns the bad into good. He pulverizes the stones, he mollifies the hard clay, he burns the weeds and makes their very ashes enrich the ground. He knows that his seed will be utterly wasted if he scatter it either on the green sod, the unploughed glebe, or the unweeded mold.

The preparation of the heart to receive the truth is equally indispensable. The hardened must be broken up by repentance.

The "shallow" must be deepened and enriched by reading, reflection, and prayer. The "thorny" must by self-scrutiny be weeded and cleansed of every noxious root. Men who attend our churches without a previous preparation of soul are as incapable of receiving and germinating divine truths as the hard and unbroken soil the seed of the husbandmen. Hence the thousands of lost sermons. Preachers are everywhere like the sower scattering his seed on unprepared soil; they are wasting their time, strength, and precious grain. Can men alter the soil of their hearts? Yes. And they are bound to do so. Hence the command, "break up the fallow ground, and sow not amongst thorns." Another thing essential to successful agriculture is—

II. Proper attention to the SEED. In physical tillage attention must be paid both to the *selection* of the seed, and to its *growth*. Let the soil be ever so good, and ever so well cultivated, the labour will be lost, and grievous disappointment will strike the heart of the farmer, in the harvest, if the seed has been bad. But necessity for caution in the selection of seed is far greater in the case of the soul. What is the true spiritual seed? The truth of God. The truth of God in relation to man, not only as an intelligent and responsible creature, but to man as a sinner involved in guilt, and requiring the special interposition of remedial mercy. In one word, the Gospel is the seed. It is like seed-corn in many respects. It is *perfect in itself*. So perfect is it that, to attempt to adding to it, or taking from it, would be to injure it. Winnow it, if you like, take off its husks, and give the chaff to the wind, but you must touch the *germ*. It is so with the "truth as it is in Jesus." Like seed-corn, *it is fitted to grow in all climates*. Corn is one of the few kinds of plants capable of growing everywhere, in every clime and on every zone. Down in the valleys, on the hillside, and on the tops of the mountains, amidst the snows of Lapland, and on the burning plains of India, it can grow—grow wherever man can live. So with Divine truth. It is fitted to souls everywhere, and in all conceivable conditions. Mere human theories are, for souls of certain types, conditions, and moods. Hence they are constantly changing and passing into obsolescence. But the truth of God is fitted to the configuration,

climates, necessities, and cravings of universal man. Like seed-corn, *it does not sow itself*. There are seeds whose downy wings convey them to spots where they plant themselves. They require no hand either to bear them, or prepare their bed. Not so with corn-grain. If it is to grow and flourish, it must be properly sown. So with Divine truth. Errors, like winged seeds, float thickly on the moral atmosphere of the world, and will plant themselves, will grow without culture in human souls, and yield a fruitful crop. But truths will not. They must be sown. Like seed-corn, *it is the support of life*. Bread, for many good reasons, has been called "the staff of life." Divine truth is the bread of souls, the bread which came down from heaven, of which, if a man eat, he shall never die. One grain of corn by proper cultivation may, in the course of ages, yield enough to support a whole generation, and one great truth rightly propagated, may become the life of nations.

But attention should be paid not only to the selection of the seed, but to *its growth*. How carefully the good farmer watches the seed, especially in its first stages. He is careful to uproot the weeds, and to scare off the fowls of heaven. In the East, the enemy of the farmer gratified his malignity by watching his hour to sow tares amongst the grain, so as to injure the crop, and disappoint the husbandman. Our Lord refers to this, when He says, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field, but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way." Hence the necessity of special watchfulness on the part of the Oriental farmer. There is an enemy ever active in endeavouring to sow the tares of error in the human soul. While men sleep he watches his opportunity and works. Look well to the seed, brother. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "They that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same; and they who have sown the wind, shall reap the whirlwind." "He that soweth of the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; he that soweth of the spirit shall of the spirit reap everlasting life." Another thing essential to successful agriculture, is—

III. Proper attention to the SEASON. Suppose a farmer to have the most fertile of soils, and prepared in the best way for the seed. Suppose him, moreover, to have selected the best seed, and

to have sown it after the most approved method, but to have done so in June rather than in March or April, would not all his labour be vain? Neither his good soil, nor his good seed, nor his good tillage would produce a good crop. There is a proper season, there is "a time to sow;" there is a period when the earth has its fecund power, and there is a time when it departs.

It is e'en thus with the soul. There are seasons for spiritual culture. There, for example, is the season of *youth*. Youth is the April day of souls. The mold is soft, the air is genial, the rains are fertilizing, and the sunbeam is full of life. Without metaphor, in young life the judgment is unwarped by prejudices, the will unfettered by habit, the conscience unseared by sin, the heart craves for love, and the intellect for knowledge. Youth is especially the season for spiritual-culture. There, again, is the season of *moral seriousness*. There is perhaps a season in the history of all, whether young or old, when the heart is softened, mollified, and struck with gravity by some providential event or religious truth. In the house of sorrow, with its clouds of grief and showers of tears, and in the house of God, under powerful sermons, such seasons often occur. Take care of the season. Many try the work of cultivation when the season has gone, try with shattered faculties, in old age, and on dying beds. What if a farmer having forgotten the right season in which to sow his corn, bethought himself when it was too late, and hurried forth on a summer's day to commit the seed into the earth. Would not all lookers on adjudge him as one demented? and would not the earth, could it speak, say to him, "It is too late now; my fecund energy is gone, I have lost all power to quicken seed. Hadst thou come to me a few weeks ago I would have blest thee in harvest with abundant crop. It is somewhat thus with souls. The time comes when the heart cannot grow Christianity.

CONCLUSION.—Brother, set thyself in earnest to this work of *soul tillage*. "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" Why? Thou hast a field to cultivate, more valuable than all the acres of the world. Why? That field is in a deplorable condition. "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and lo, it was all grown over

with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down." Why? No work will prove so remunerative to thee as this. Under God, thou canst turn the wilderness into a paradise. Thou canst plant trees within thee that will cluster with immortal fruit, open rivers that will roll with waves of life, and surround thyself with an atmosphere that shall be luminous with the light, fragrant with the aroma, and vocal with the music of the heavenly world. Why? There is no time to lose. Many of the years of thy short life have already passed away. The shadows are thickening around thee, and night is coming on, when no man can work. "Go work to-day in my vineyard, saith the Lord."



THE BYEWAYS OF THE BIBLE.—No. XXIV.

SUBJECT: *The Great Importance of Small Duties.*

"He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much."—Luke xvi. 10.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Sixty-fourth.

THE key-word of this passage is that which stands fourth. A servant is "faithful" who has a steady eye to the interests and wishes of his master. This distinguishes him not only from the selfish servant who merely considers his own advantage, but also from the self-willed servant who merely considers his own pleasure. A gardener who did too little, and neglected all your best plants, and a gardener who did too much, and bestowed amazing attention on your weeds, would be equally unfaithful, though in opposite ways. A really faithful servant, it therefore follows, will be different from them both. How is this to be tested? By his attention to small matters. Such is the doctrine of our text—a doctrine confirmed, I. By Common Sense; II. By Common Testimony; and III. By Common Experience.

I. COMMON SENSE. The nature of the case, to begin, is confirmatory of this view. It stands to reason, as men say. If my feelings as a servant are such, that I cannot bear to see my

master wronged in regard even to a trifle, it stands to reason that I shall be still more unwilling to see him wronged in any thing of importance. If there is no room in my heart for the smaller evil, much less for the great one. But with a servant who is, in either way, unfaithful, it is clear that no such rule will hold good. If, for example, he is utterly selfish, having all his thoughts engrossed by his own interests and advantage, it is evident that no injury to his master will much trouble him, whether great or small in itself ; in either case, in his judgment, it will be too small to be noticed. On the other hand, if he is merely capricious and self-willed, you never can feel the least certainty as to the kind of judgment he will form, or the kind of line he will take ; the probability is that he will take exactly the wrong line, attending to small things overmuch, and to great things not at all. So that it is by small things, in one way or another, that we obtain the best test. According as they are despised, or unduly exalted, or simply made much of for the master's sake, so you find selfishness, or self-will, or true faithfulness, at the root. Such is the common judgment of the world. We try a man's eyesight by small print.

II. COMMON TESTIMONY. The judgment of mankind just spoken of has been not only arrived at, but declared. The *vox populi* has long ago issued its decree on this point. In that great "collection of cases" tried before the united reason of mankind, and which has all the solemnity and authority, therefore, of a final Court of Appeal, there are several which bear on this point. In that great uninspired "Book of Proverbs," which, as being the result of a strict inductive process carried out by an infinite number of observers on an infinite number of instances, may be said to have something of scientific accuracy at its back, there are several familiar utterances which accord with our text. Thus we find it recognised, on the one hand, as a law, that those who "take care of the pence," will be sure to take care of "the pounds." On the other hand, we find that this law, wide and universal as it is in its way, is partly limited and partly supplemented by another of a different kind. The "pence" may be taken care of, *e.g.*, not from a wise discrimination between true and false economy, but from a mere caprice, or

spirit of stinginess, and then the first formula does not hold good. In such a case a second formula comes in which declares, that it is not "taking care of the pence" at all—but only that "penny wisdom" which is "pound foolishness"—to let them rust in a box; or to be afraid of spending a penny where a penny is required. In other words, there must be some kind of principle, and some kind of adherence to a principle, before the first rule will apply. But, wherever there is such faithful adherence, the rule is absolute and precise. Anyone who sees the real importance of small gains, will never be mistaken about large ones. It is not every man, by any means, who knows the true value of a penny; but if anyone has once acquired that difficult knowledge, it is a simple matter of multiplication to learn the value of any number of pounds.

III. COMMON EXPERIENCE. Examples of our position are abundant, but I only select three, two from the Old Testament scriptures and one from the New. Need I say, of those from the Old Testament, that Joseph is one? Faithful to Potiphar as a slave, he was even more so as a friend; faithful when in prison, he was not less so when next to the throne; faithful to his master, his gaoler, his kindred, his sovereign, he was also faithful to his God. The whole of his life, in fact, was a sermon on this text. The same is true of Daniel, the next case we select. The first thing we read about him, while still a youth, was his faithfulness in religion, and that on a point which many persons would think too small to be noticed. One of the last things we read about him, when far advanced in years, was a degree of faithfulness to his sovereign which even his enemies pronounced without flaw, and a degree of faithfulness to God which death and torture could not shake. Was not the old adage, "The child's the father of the man," verified in this case? Was not the child Daniel, refusing the king's meat, father of Daniel the venerable Prime Minister of Darius, defying the cruelty both of men and lions, rather than be unfaithful to his God? And might not we draw the two pictures, and, inclosing them in one frame, write under them thus combined, the words of our text?

Our last example is from the New Testament, and is the

highest as well as last. When the Lord Jesus Christ, after feeding so many thousands by the word of His power, said, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost," was He not faithful in that which is least—least in itself—least as compared with Him—least as compared with Him at that moment? On the other hand, when He asked three times over, that the dreadful cup of his final sufferings might, "if possible," pass away from Him, and yet afterwards could say to Peter, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it," was He not faithful in that which is much? And when, a few hours after, He exclaimed on the Cross, "It is finished," was He not crowning a life of faithfulness by a death of like kind? So that, in this case, as in every other, that which He taught by his precepts He exemplified by His conduct; and His own deeds are the best commentary on and the best proof of His words.

The subject is very easily and directly applicable to ourselves. Are we, in a Christian sense, "taking care of the pence?" Do we give heed to the foot-notes and the small print of God's law? Are we doing what we can with our one talent, or only talking of what we would do if possessed of a hundred? How are we dealing with the small trials, the petty obstacles, of our path? Do we quietly place them on one side, and go on; or do we kick them away impatiently with an angry scowl on the brow? The way to test the cleanliness of a room is to examine its corners and odd nooks. Have we the same kind of evidence of the holy faithfulness of our lives? No other evidence is very valuable if without this. All other evidence is doubled if it has this in addition.

The doctrine may also be employed to the great encouragement of our faith. It may be applied, in all deepest reverence, to the dealings of God Himself. Some of His promises to us are "exceeding great and precious," almost too great for faith always to realize, or even for hope to conceive. Will He, in things so amazingly great, be faithful to His word? We may prove it by His faithfulness in "that which is least." Do we find that He takes care of us in temporal things? Are we heard when we offer our prayers about the petty wants of this life—petty in themselves, though most momentous to us? It

is astonishing sometimes how small a request on the part of a believer in Christ will find its way to God's throne, and bring a blessing in return. If God is thus faithful to us in the small things, how much more in the great? What may we not expect from One who "numbers the very hairs of our heads!"

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THE FOREIGN PULPIT.—No. XXVI.

SUBJECT: *The Glory of Christianity in the Birth of its Author.*

"And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed," &c.—Luke ii. 1—14.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Sixty-fifth.

THOUGH so familiar, this narrative is always suggestive. There is always something in it which we have not remarked before, or have not sufficiently remarked. But for my part, amid this harmony of feeling about it, I hear a note of discord arising from those who know no distinction between narratives that are simply historical and those that are religious, and who, in spite of all that Christ has said and that wise men have repeated, would apprehend religion, and the things of God, with the understanding which, nevertheless, is able to estimate and test earthly relations only. It is as though a man should sit down to calculate wherein the beauty of a painting consisted instead of looking at it and allowing it to impress him. And if beauty cannot be discovered with the understanding, neither can religion and the divine. They must be seen and felt. They cannot be measured and calculated. This narrative is not simply historical.

One can hardly fail to remark that God would not have us drawn aside by too full a narration of the childhood of Christ, from the principal subject of the Gospel—the public work of the Redeemer. Nevertheless, that which has been recorded is sufficient; for the glimpses we have of the infancy of Jesus are

not simply historical facts which when once read are known for ever ; but, like the works of our masters, these records are ever revealing new features and religious truths to those who devoutly ponder them. You know that the most beautiful works of Christian art draw their subjects from these simple narratives. For what can be more beautiful or divine than this—the child, who is to be the Saviour of the world, in the arms of the loving mother ; the angels appearing in the still night to the shepherds ; the simple song of praise of those heavenly spirits, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men ?” The suggestive picture shows us *the glory of Christianity in the hour of its birth*. For—

I. THE POWERS OF THE EARTH ARE AT ITS SERVICE. Augustus and his Syrian Proconsul are the first to appear in the narrative which introduces us to a child in a manger. A more striking contrast we can hardly conceive than that between the child lying helpless in a manger, protected simply by a mother’s love, and the Roman emperor on his throne, with vast armies obeying his word, regarded with awe by all the nations from the Rhine and the Don to the deserts of Africa, from the Atlantic to the Euphrates. Why is this emperor, maintaining his sway over the world with four hundred thousand warriors, introduced in connection with this unassuming event ? Perhaps to lend the glory of his name to mark the time when this unassuming event occurred ? Not so. It is not that the time of the birth of Jesus is to be calculated from Augustus. On the contrary, His birth is the central fact in the world’s history, and from it time is henceforth to be calculated whether it be time past or to come. Open the books of history and you will find that fourteen years after the putting of the child in the manger at Bethlehem Augustus died, having thirty-one years before the angels proclaimed this joy to the shepherds, gained a brilliant victory over his rival to the imperial throne. It is not to mark the time that this great monarch appears in our text, but he appears *to serve* in the bringing in of Christianity. That the Messiah of God might be born in Bethlehem according to the counsel of God, Augustus, rendered free by his victories to arrange the internal affairs of his empire, must issue the command

that an enrolment should be made throughout his dominions ; and accordingly, like every other Jew, Joseph of Nazareth hastens to the principal city of his tribe, and the ancient prophecy is fulfilled :—" And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah, for out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel."

The world esteems nothing more highly than Rule. No ruler is thought more highly of than the Roman Emperor, and of all Roman emperors Augustus was, and continued to be regarded, the greatest ; so that on the coronation of his descendants they were accustomed to say, " Be prosperous as Augustus." And it is this Augustus who, without knowing it, has to *serve* the child in the manger. The first feature in the narrative, therefore, that strikes us is that, whether they know it or not, *earthly powers must serve Christ and His kingdom*. The rulers of the land of the Jews, though they persecuted the Lord, only served Him. The high council and Pilate, when they thought that they had destroyed the Galilean, only served Him ; introducing Him by His cross into glory that henceforth His name might spread with irresistible force, and that all peoples of the earth might be blessed in Him. The world had no idea at the time that the crucified One was the victor, only served by his triumphant foes. But it is so to the present day. The powers of the earth can do nothing but serve the plan of God of which the Redeemer is the Head and Centre. The divine is alone for its own sake ; the earthly can do nothing but serve it and perish.

And as it is with the rulers so is it too with all possessed of earthly power, whether they know it or not, and even where they contend against the plan of God, they can only serve Him whom He has sent. Some of you almost remember the time when it was thought a sign of culture to mock at Christ and His cause. Now the best thought of the noblest men turns towards Christ, and the influence of this is felt on all conditions of men, so that we may now say to the man who scorns, that he is behind the times in which he lives ; you may apply to him the reproach of the Lord addressed to the Pharisees, " Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky. But can ye not discern the signs of the times ?" These men *now*, instead of discouraging, only give impulse to the friends of Christ.

Look back on your own life, you will find there experiences enough, showing that earthly power serves religion and Christianity. You commit some wrong which makes you amazed at yourself that you should be capable of it. It shows you how much evil slumbers within you, and how needful it is that it should be rooted out, and in this way is sin itself made to show you your need of a guide, and to induce you to grasp the hand of your Redeemer. Or you see the enemies uniting themselves against the good cause; your fear lest they should succeed only stimulates you to renewed conflict.

All these earthly forces are at the service of Christianity. The earthly has a being only to serve the eternal. The world, with all its show and pomp and pleasure, simply serves to accomplish the plan of God, and when it has paid that toll passes on. And so Augustus passed away without knowing that He, for whose birth he himself had arranged, would one day be a king of the whole earth; also those Pharisees, and Pilate—but the divine that dwelt in that child in the manger has remained, rules and vanquishes.

II. IT CRADLES ITSELF IN THE CIRCLE OF THE FAMILY. The family relation is the most sacred of earthly relations, and it is into its midst that the sacred narrative puts the child who already possesses in the germ the powers that afterwards develope themselves. Is there anything more sacred on earth than the infant in its mother's arms? The very smile of the infant is a proof that all the beautiful things that shall one day reveal themselves in him, are there in the germ already; and the heavenly germ of religion is in this abode of innocence, though it first makes its appearance as the other powers unfold, like the blossom which does not burst forth till the leaves appointed for its protection have appeared. Christianity makes the circle of the family its cradle, and will not thrive where this sanctuary is desecrated by passion or a worldly mind. He who was to be our Saviour could not be entrusted to a distracted household. The most beautiful plant which ever adorned our earth, could only thrive in the sunshine of Mary's quiet virtue. She who was to see the first smile of the child, and to watch his first unfolding, great, though it seemed so small, needed to have a mind turned to God that

she might share in the growth of the child's soul. It is a pleasant feature in the picture drawn in this narrative, that the child should be placed in the circle of a pious family ; it is also a striking and impressive feature ; for it shows us the family circle as the cradle of religion, as the first temple which it reared for itself after the powers of the world had served to pave the way for its introduction. You all know that the family circle is the most beautiful in our earthly life. It affords us rest, fostering care and love, when wearied with business, we return to its bosom. It is the place where we can express ourselves without restraint, and be what we are. It is the object of our love which, like all pure love, is ennobling. But though this is high, it is not the highest thing that can be said of home. If you would know the family circle in its highest significance, and the secret by which it may be always happy, you must learn to regard it as the cradle of piety.

Where family ties are disregarded, no wonder if religion and abiding happiness are wanting. But the question for us is, Is our house a cradle of piety ? If you must say no, then let it be confessed that true happiness does not dwell with you ; that true love does not bless you ; that true peace has not crossed your threshold, and it may be that, as the result of this, your children will grow up without winning Christ. If it is true that, in proportion as families are distracted, the state is weakened, it is more emphatically true that where there is nothing noble in the domestic life, the angel of religion reluctantly withdraws, waiting for awhile without to see if the trouble of the distracted house will not call her back again ; for though you will not offer her a cradle of peace, she will enter the place of sorrow to heal your wounds, and to bring back the angel of peace to the place from which she has been driven. Prove yourselves, then, you who have a right to complain that your companion in life has broken your domestic peace, and know whether you have done all you might to keep the peace. For if you know the power of piety, complaint will not alone arise to God, but, recognising that a hard lot has fallen to you, which has to be borne in silence, you will pray to God to forgive where forgiveness is needed, and to strengthen you where you are weak. To Mary the Saviour was entrusted. To you, pious women, is the vocation

given to prepare a quiet temple for Christianity in your homes. You do no great thing when you simply adorn your children's bodies, or furnish their minds. Your children will not have to thank you, amid the pressure of life, for that which can alone sustain, if you have not brought them to Christ, and to fellowship with Him.

The parents' joy should be to point their children to the Saviour, and not simply by their words, but by their lives. Where this is not done, the preacher must not be looked to, for he cannot possibly do what the home should do, but neglects to do. The family must be the cradle of religion.

III. IT OPENS HEAVEN TO US. It is night. Not a cold, wet, stormy night, such as we are familiar with, but a night in the land of Judah, where shepherds and their flocks are in the fields. Suddenly the darkness clears; an angel appears, and a glorious light shines around the shepherds, alarming them. "Fear not," says the heavenly messenger, "for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to you, and to all people," &c. And now the heaven is opened, and a host of its powers praise God, and say, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men."

No work of art can surpass the beauty of this simple description; and just as the work of an artist, be he painter or writer, is necessarily an expression of a thought, so does this description reveal to us an eternal truth, that religion opens heaven to us, that by it the curtain is removed that separates the visible from the invisible. Yes, where piety approaches, heaven is opened, the Divine is revealed, the songs of the blessed spirits are heard, "Glory to God in the highest"—a song which was first heard when Christ came, because Christ it was who first took away that which lay between God and us.

Beautiful is this earth, as it surrounds us with an endless variety of form and of life, the product of the Divine will. Beautiful above all things is the varied intellectual activity of man. But as the earth, with all that stirs on it, would be nothing without the sun which God has placed in the heavens, so neither is human life anything, notwithstanding all its pleasures and toils, if heaven is closed above us. This world is

nothing apart from the world to come. There is nothing to break up the clouds and darkness of life, if there is no heaven open above us.

It was only a place in the heavens that was opened to the shepherds, sufficient simply for them to see the angels. It is so with us whenever we think of Jesus only as the child, or where the Redeemer has scarcely begun to enter our hearts. We do not yet behold the whole heaven open, nor do we see the fulness of the Deity ; we only see the Divine in the form of angels. We feel a few pious emotions, but we do not understand that man can become one with God through Christ. The Divine approaches us in childhood only, under the veil of angels ; and many adults as well as children know the heavenly light only in this form. Woe to the man who would vilely rob children of their faith in the angels, when they are capable of apprehending the Divine in no higher form ! Who would deprive the children of the many kind angels that dwell in their world of innocence ? Don't grudge them their heaven. It is to them infinitely more than we usually have left, when we would be wise and with a higher form have nothing but emptiness. Deprive man of his heaven, and he must seek rest in a world where things appear but to disappear. Slay religion within you, and will you not at once become a prey to the power of death which is still left after you have robbed the world of its joy by shutting up the heavens ? A thousandfold better to have and to love the Supreme, though in a poor and earthly form. But if the child in the manger is known to you as the Redeemer one with God, having the fulness of God dwelling in Him, so that to see Him is to see the Father—you need angels no longer. The starlight disappears when the sun is in the heavens. Heaven itself is open to us.

To us *all* ? No. It is closed to those who live for themselves, and for the world.

We may well rejoice in the night in which Christ was born. He who is now exalted was glorified in His birth. Earthly powers were serving Him. The family circle received Him. Heaven was opened when He came.

From the German,

By R. VAUGHAN PRYCE, M.A., LL.B.

SUBJECT : *The Eternity of God's Salvation.*

"Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath ; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner : but my salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished." —Isa. li. 6.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Sixty-sixth.

THIS is evidently one of those predictions having special reference to the introduction of the Gospel dispensation, with which this book is so thickly studded, and which have given so justly to Isaiah the designation of "the evangelical prophet." We may regard verses 4 and 5 as forming a kind of preface to verse 6 ; and in that preface the clue is given in four ruling words, viz., law, judgment, righteousness, and salvation.

"Hearken unto me, O my people, and give ear unto me, O my nation ; for a law shall proceed from me." The Gospel is a law—not written upon tables of stone, but upon the fleshy tables of the heart by the Spirit of the living God ; it is a law, not of servile bondage, but a perfect law of liberty ; a law of faith, and love, and obedience ; it is the law by which God will henceforth govern men. As the prophet in another place says "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king ; He will save us." His law is in order to His rule ; and His rule is in order to the salvation of men.

"And I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people." The word *judgment* is here used in the sense of a body or code of laws, such as form the basis of the constitution of a kingdom. It must point to the body of Gospel truth which God is about to reveal to the world. The doctrines, precepts, promises, which centre upon the person and work, which together are bound up in the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, these form the basis, the foundation which God will "make settled" for a light to the people. Upon Christ, and upon those truths which focus all in Christ, as it is written, "he that believeth shall never be confounded."

"My righteousness is near." It is about to be signally manifested, and in an unheard of way, by the death of my only begotten

Son. Therein am I about to be seen, Just, and yet the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

“My salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people. The isles shall wait on me, and on mine arm shall they trust.” The good news that men are to be saved by the free grace of their God, is already published, and it shall awaken loving trust in Me wherever it is known. Then comes the climax upon this preface; the eternal endurance which is the destiny of this saving rule of the Almighty—“Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath, for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be for ever; and my righteousness shall not be abolished.” Three things here present themselves for our consideration:—I. The Design and Destiny of the Heavens and Earth. II. Of the Mortal Race of Man. III. Of God's Saving Rule.

I. THE DESTINY OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH. (1.) Let us think first of *their nature*. They are an emanation from the mind of God. To say that nature *is* God is Pantheism; but to affirm that nature *expresses* God is to be consistent with Divine revelation. Creation is the embodied thought of God; as the book is the embodied thought of the poet, as the statue is the embodied thought of the sculptor, as the building is the embodied thought of the architect. This being so, there can be no inherent reason why the heavens and the earth should continue; their creation has added nothing to the being of God, their destruction can withdraw nothing from His Being. I may destroy my own handiwork, may burn the book, or dash the statue in pieces, but I have not lost the thought, the inspiration once embodied there; my mind remains the same mind as before. So every vestige of the visible creation passed away; God still remains God; He cannot suffer loss or diminution in the slightest of His glorious perfections. Here, then, we have at the outset a hint from the nature of the creation itself, that it may be but intended to be just as the expressions of our own thoughts in wood, or stone, or iron, or brass, a temporary thing.

(2.) Consider now *the design* of the creation.

(a.) This is its immediate design—to *subserve the well-being of man*. To see this you have but to read the account of the creation in Gen. i., where all things are called into being, and marshalled to await the coming forth of their mighty, uncrowned monarch, with universal dominion, Man! To understand that this is the doctrine of revelation, you have but to read the 8th Psalm. This beautiful, compacted structure of heavens and earth was designed to be a suitable and a delightful habitation for man—a material world fitted for his present sensuous nature—where he shall be taught, trained, tried, developed for God, for heaven, for life eternal.

(b.) But what is the *ultimate design* of the heavens and the earth? Like all else, *to declare the glory of God*. “The heavens declare the glory of God,” &c. “The invisible things of Him from the foundation of the world are clearly seen,” &c. “He hath not left Himself without a witness,” &c.

But upon this two remarks must be made; 1. This declaration is by itself alone imperfect, as all material signs of truth must be. The printed page may tell us many truths, but there are truths which the printed page of itself can never tell. A picture may carry much meaning to the mind, but there are important meanings which a picture can never show forth. Creation cannot declare to us all that we ought to know of God. We may see from it His “eternal power and Godhead,” but not His justice, not fully His mercy and His love. There are apparent contradictions in nature; there is the genial sun, the gentle dew, the balmy wind; but there is also the fiery volcano, the awful earthquake, the furious hurricane. Creation cannot reconcile its own phenomena; its testimony is imperfect without some higher and concurrent light.

2. The other remark is, that the testimony of creation is too often rendered void or perverted through human sinfulness. Either men do not see God at all in nature, or they view Him with vision all awry. On this account also creation fails to fulfil its grand design, the declaration of the glory of God; and therefore God has not only spread out the picture of creation before our eyes, but He has made His Voice to be heard. God has *spoken*; creation’s testimony is supplemented by express revelation.

3. And now carry your thoughts forward to the *revealed destiny* of the heavens and earth. They are to pass away utterly. The heavens shall vanish away, like smoke that glides off and is lost in thin air. The earth is to grow old like a garment, and then to be folded up like a thing worn out and cast aside. As the body corrupts when the soul departs, as the house crumbles into ruin when tenants forsake it, so the world will crumble and fall when the race of its inhabitants is no more.

“The cloud capp’d towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And like an unsubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a wrack behind.”

There are, you are aware, many solemn passages in the Word of God predicting this event, but I will confine myself to one, and it carries in its bosom a rousing application to our consciences. “Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.”

II. The second point in our text is THE DESTINY OF THE MORTAL RACE OF MAN. “They that dwell therein shall die in like manner.” Man and the world date from the same origin, and they are formed of the same material. We came forth from the dust of the earth, and we shall soon be returning to our mother earth again. The world and man are to pass away at the same moment. Men will die one by one, and finally the race itself will pass away, not, as appears from the Word of God, by a gradual extinction, but by a sudden revolution.

1. Let us consider the *nature of the mortal race of man*. It is simply a part of the visible material creation. Our bodies are nothing but clay of a somewhat finer grain than that on which we tread. The same elements are present in each, only in us fashioned into nobler forms and for higher uses. Since then these bodies of ours, which hold our mortal life, are essentially part of the material world, there can be no reason why they should not share its fate. Our bodies, like the universe, are liable to decay and destruction, since they are but the setting forth, the clothing of something else; but

our spirits are the breath of God, and therefore can never perish.

2. Think again of *the design of our mortal race*. It is pre-eminently to declare the glory of God. "I have created him for my glory, I have formed him ; yea, I have made him." But this glory that excelleth God is to derive not so much from our bodily nature, for this is but the kind of glory that all His other works render to Him, an *unconscious* glory ; as from our spiritual nature, from renovated wills, from purified affections, from a redeemed and sanctified nature. The bodily, sensuous life is only a means to this great end ; it provides the material for our trial and probation. We, as men, are spirits, not bodies ; the life of the body is in order to that of spirit. Now, when the end is reached, the means may be dispensed with. When God shall have reached the end He proposed to Himself in His wisdom in the creation of humanity, when He shall have reaped His great spiritual harvest out of these world-fields, then the mortal race of men shall have fulfilled their purpose, and shall pass away.

3. We shall gain further light upon the purpose of God with regard to our earthly race, if we glance at the analogy between the individual life and that of the whole race. Each man among us is the miniature, the epitome (the microcosm, "in little all the sphere") of the history of the world. He is the microcosm you trace in yourself imperfections of bodily and mental powers ; you are conscious of the seeds of death within you ; all connected with your present condition speaks plainly the lesson that you are in a dissolving, uncertain, precarious, transitory condition. It is fitly described in the emblems of Scripture, a tent, not a fixed habitation, a lodging, not a final rest. Now, I say you may trace a close analogy to all this in the history of the whole race. The world grows old ; there are wrinkles on its brow ; already it totters in feebleness and premature decay. Glance down the long page of its annals, where shall you find stability and enduring permanence in its names, its institutions, its glories ? What mighty people has yet resisted the ceaseless law of change ? National life rises and falls, ebbs and flows, like the waves of the sea. We have to alter the map of the world every few years. Even now, as we look around us, all in national life is

shifting, changing, passing. Who, with history in his hands, can but wonder what strange and unforeseen revolutions we are yet to fall upon? And do not you see, brethren, that this inherent weakness, instability in the life of nations and of the race is truly the foreshadowing of the doom which God's Word pronounces on the race? It now decays and waxes old; and that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

4. Then remember that this is *the predicted destiny* of our mortal race. All living men and all their sensuous surroundings shall be utterly swept away. "We are all such stuff as dreams are made of." It is revealed in the Word of God that three great events are to take place at the same epoch and point of time: The reception of redeemed men into the presence of Christ and of God, and glory eternal, the judgment and perdition of ungodly men, and the destruction of the heavens and earth by fire. Oh, as these scenes pass vividly before our imagination, and the very ground seems reeling beneath our feet, with what intense solemnity do the words of Holy Writ come home to our minds? "This world passeth away, and the lust thereof," &c. "Lift up," &c.

III. We are thus brought to the third and last point in our text, viz.: *The destiny of God's saving rule.* "My salvation," &c. By the saving rule of God, we mean that rule which God has revealed in the Gospel, in conforming to which men enjoy salvation; the rule which demands repentance, implicit faith in the Mediator, and obedience to the Holy Ghost, whose influence is shed abroad by virtue of the new covenant which God seals to man in the death of Christ His Son. It is God's plan, or rule, or way of salvation, and it is founded upon the immutable attribute of His righteousness.

1. Look for a moment *at its nature.* The Gospel is the *full* and perfect exhibition of the mind of God. Infinitely more so than nature—or than man—because it reveals *all* God to us. Not a part of His nature but the whole of His nature; not one attribute, but all his attributes. The Gospel reveals the power of God, and the wisdom of God, and the righteousness of God, and the mercy of God, and the grace of God, and the love of God. It is, in short, the full-orbed glory of God seen in the face of Jesus

Christ. Therefore it is final. We are not to look for further light, and we do not require it. The Gospel is a finished thing, and though an angel from heaven should preach another, let him be accursed.

2. *Look at its design.* It is in order to the complete blessedness of our immortal spirits in earth and heaven—here and hereafter, and for ever and ever. By grace we enter it here, through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ; in glory we are to know its unseen, unheard of joys hereafter. Oh, it is a blessed thing to know that if we have come under the power of the Gospel here, and have surrendered ourselves unto God, willing subjects of that heavenly kingdom, we shall still be under that holy blessed rule in which the angels take delight. The difference is that here we have not fully taken up our citizenship. Here it is grace without glory, *there* the Lord will give grace *and* glory and no good thing, &c.

3. Finally, God's saving rule shall endure for ever and ever. As its Author—as its subjects—the spirits of just men made perfect. The central object of heaven is the throne and Him that sits thereon. It is a reign we are looking forward to—a reign of perpetual peace and joy. In that new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness ages upon ages shall roll over the heads of the redeemed in an uninterrupted bliss. And when they gather in the Father's house for praise, this will be the burden of the frequent song, "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, because thou hast taken to thyself this great power, and hast reigned!" "Salvation and honour," &c.

My dear hearers, the rule of God must either save and bless, and eternally exalt you, or it must crush and destroy you. If you refuse to repent, trust and obey, you arm the power of Omnipotence against you. You convert the Divine branch of peace into the iron rod of chastisement. Knowing therefore the terrors of the Lord, we would persuade—rejoicing in His mercy, we would beseech you, Be reconciled to God. Make your peace with Him, Who must reign—make your peace with Him through Jesus, who waits to receive each suppliant, and cast none out—repent and believe—give diligence to make your calling and election sure, &c.

Forest Hill.

E. JOHNSON, B.A.

SUBJECT : *Self-Injury—what is it, and how is it to be prevented ?*

"Wherefore, if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands, or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire."—Matt. xviii. 8, 9.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Sixty-seventh.

IN the course of our lives we may have been injured by others, and we don't readily forget or forgive it as we ought: in the course of our lives, too, it is to be feared, more or less, consciously or unconsciously, we may have injured others. This is sad, for it is far more painful to harm another than to be harmed yourself. We may forgive a man for the harm he has done us, but God knows, we find it far harder to forgive ourselves for the injury we do to others. But the class of offences treated in these verses is different to either of these. These verses treat of self-injury, and it is against this Christ warns us solemnly and earnestly. It is *our own* "hand," and "eye," and "arm" offending us, and not those of others. But the majority would scarcely believe it possible. Injure myself, a man says, never! So far from doing that, I guard myself. With me, and my life, and prosperity, it is like the position which being the key to possession and entrance of the whole citadel, is well-guarded, and bristling cannon are mounted aloft, whilst relays of sentinels pace underneath in perpetual watch. As carefully as this, a man says, I surround and guard myself:—and yet, alas! how many who thus flatter themselves, are really doing themselves irreparable harm, and cherishing the foes who are slowly but surely undermining life and character, making good the fact "A man's foes shall be they of his own household."

How, and when, and in what do men thus injure themselves, and what is the prevention ?

I. We may take the hand, and eye, and foot as symbolical of what belongs closely and intimately to our being and nature: our habits, affections, dispositions, tendencies. Do not these perpetually offend us? harm and obstruct the growth, and mar the beauty and symmetry of the spiritual life? How many

times in the year have not the best to complain of the "self-injury" done by the growth and manifestation of some bad tendency—some innate evil disposition. It may be indolence—it may be pride or lust, passion or selfishness. Are we not clearly conscious how these offend, and harm, and undermine us? We are not alone in such sad experience. Moses, David, Peter, and others outside the range of Scripture History—in many of these there is the "offending eye," or "hand," or "foot," doing the life and soul of the man some injury. Our own individual experience is the best comment on the fact, that these may become obstacles—causes and sources of offence to our soul and character.

II. But again, under this symbolical language we may include *things that we blindly and foolishly turn into means of offence and self injury*; viz., outward relationships, and circumstances, and duties, and pleasures. We may, and do, make these into means of "offence" and "self-injury." Our worldly enjoyments and avocations, our human friendships, these we foolishly turn against ourselves, until they become obstructive and "offensive" to us. We fear there is something in the life of each of us which, though laudable enough, when controlled wisely, and religiously used, may, by folly and ignorance, become an "offence" and obstacle, subtracting daily, so much power, and worth, and life from us. Anything that makes a man less virtuous, Christlike, less humble and heavenly-minded, and self-sacrificing, becomes, in its measure, an "offence" unto him, a means of self-injury. We had better far hatch beneath our roof a brood of serpents which would deal us their deadly bite, than thus turn circumstances, relationships, pursuits, pleasures, friendships, into sources of endless, perhaps hopeless harm; and yet, how many thousands are doing it every day of their life!

Now, *What is the prevention?* A decisive one,—Christ says, "If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, *cut them off, and cast them from thee.* We may think, as we hear people say of a child with some physical weakness or deformity, "in the course of time he'll outgrow it, as he strengthens with youth and manhood." We fear the reverse would be the case with character. Our habits, weaknesses, obstacles, snares, offences, all these would only gather power with time, undermine our character, and do us deeper

harm. It must be no momentary self-chastisement or penance—no mere determination to try to repress—we must adopt no half measures whatever. Just as with dross in gold, and speck in fruit, and moth in garment, as with parasite and weed, so with these moral offenders, we must “*cast them out*”—by the grace of God deal with them with a high hand. “If thy hand or foot offend thee”—what? Why “cut them off.” “If thy eye offend thee”—what? Why “pluck it out.” Whatever it be, however dear. Be it a weakness, excess, wrong, a lust, an offence, we must, in the name of God, exorcise the evil spirit and cast forth the offender, that the offence may cease. Is all this easy, think you? Follow the downcast young ruler (Matt. xix. 21, 22)—the love of paltry gain and possession had laid deep hold of him—and he gave up Christ before he would make a sacrifice of his gains—and lost what?—by failing to make the sacrifice—why, what earth couldn’t have procured him had she piled her accumulated jewels and treasures in mountain-heaps before him. Observe: It ought not to be difficult to do all this, *for our own sake*. If we want to live nobly, and stand at length with the heroes of the skies, *It ought not to be for Christ’s sake*. What would all our self-denial measure set by the side of Bethlehem, Nazareth, Calvary, and its Cross? And last though not least, *for the sake of others*. Oh! if there be a soul of chivalry within us, we shall be ready to “cut off”—“cast away”—“pluck out”—whatever thus offends and injures us, and which, in offending us, may be harming others and grieving the heart of Christ.—Amen.

Chelmsford, Essex.

THEODORE HOOKE.

SUBJECT: *Ceaseless Prayer.*

“Pray without ceasing.”—1 Thess. v. 17.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Sixty-eighth.

NO other human exercise is so essentially spiritual as prayer; none can give joys so divine; none can be so ennobling to human character. The study of our text gives rise to the following thoughts as to the nature of this exercise.

First : *It is the soul's approach to God.* Many of our conditions of mind and heart do not admit of that kind of prayer which is called *communion* with the Deity ; for we are often far from Him in our thoughts and sympathies. To enjoy true intercourse with the Invisible we must be "in the spirit." The effort of the heart to draw near to God, however, *is* prayer, though of a lower kind—that is to say, a preliminary kind ; for with perseverance it leads to communion. To realize this *we* must draw near to *Him*. Jehovah does not change His position in relation to us. What scriptures seem to intimate that He does must be expounded in the light of the truth that He is *absolutely immutable*, and consequently as ready to bestow His blessings at one time as another. When we realise the Divine presence in our worship, we are apt to say that "the Lord has drawn near to us ;" but, really, it is we have fulfilled the conditions by which the blissful experience of nearness to Him is possible to all at all times. The tide it is which advances and recedes, the shore remains. The sun shines ever in space, though earth's revolutions and atmospheric changes often hide him from our view.

Secondly : Prayer is *The soul's converse with God.* It is the successful breathing forth of the spirit's emotions into the ear of Jehovah—that which secures direct response from Him. This view excludes all merely mechanical performances called prayer, whether of revolving machines in heathen temples, or of human lips in Christian congregations. It includes all communications from the human heart to the Divine, from the first prevailing cry of the penitent, "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me," to that of the veteran Christian in the conquest of death, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." Our text is an unequivocal admonition to *ceaseless* prayer. As such—

I. IT SETS BEFORE US A POSSIBLE IDEAL. We are too apt to regard the lofty ideals of the Bible as figments of human imaginations—very beautiful to look at, but so ethereal as to be quite impracticable—rather than as revelations from the Infinite, for holy stimulus in human life, and susceptible of actual embodiment in the Christian character. But our Father does not trifle with us with fictions. {The Bible's examples of mighty

faith and invincible fidelity to principle are neither invented abstractions nor supernatural beings, but "men of like passions" with ourselves ; while its revelations of human duty and possible attainment are all matters of the intensest practical interest. The truth is that we are so dwarfed, spiritually, by the prostitution and almost sole confinement of the soul's action to the region of the senses, that we are incapable of the faith or the spiritual ambition necessary to transform the promises and ideals given us into the realities of experience. Two companion tourists reach the foot of a snow-crowned altitude together. Raising their eyes to the dazzling height, the ambition of climbing is crushed in one, and he cries "Impossible !" while the other, finding one attainable shelf among the rugged cliffs, says, "At least that is possible ; I will try—and reaches it. This gives him another "possible" above, and up he goes—each attainment presenting another possibility, and each possibility being, in its turn, transformed into an attainment—until he is lost to his "impossible" friend below. "Pray without ceasing," says Jehovah ; "climb to the heights of ceaseless communion with me." But we, in our sluggish supineness, have no climbing ambition, and we cling to the old dull flats, answering God's *excelsior* with a sleepy *non possumus*. Brothers ! "All things are possible to him that believeth." With the faith in God that we put in man, or half the fervid emulation in spiritual life that we exercise in wordly affairs, what would Christians not accomplish !

II. IT IS AS REALLY AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF PRIVILEGE AS OF DUTY.—*Duty* and *privilege* are really but diverse names of the same thing ; their one purpose being to impress us in our different moods with the importance to ourselves and others of the due exercise by us of the varied functions of our being in our manifold and multiform relationships. The Christian life is too often regarded as a mere round of religious duties, and thus the gospel "law of liberty" becomes a system of burdensome injunctions. Not till men shall have learned to interpret God's commands by His invitations and promises—"Men ought always to pray," for instance, by "Ask and ye shall receive"—will the Church rule the world with her spiritual strength and

beauty. The deep necessities of man's spiritual condition and relationships are in perfect harmony with the injunction of our text. Seeing that prayer is *the method* of communication between man and the Godhead, it is as evident that that communication should be continuous, in order to the sustenance of healthy spiritual life as that the continuance of vitality in any part of a living organism is dependent on the due connection of that part with the seat of life in that organism. "Prayer is the Christian's vital breath, the Christian's native air." If we are in health we do not regard breathing as a *burdensome duty*; nor do we wish that it could be made a periodical, or occasional, rather than a continuous exercise. Prayer, again, is the appropriation by us of any and all the blessings of the spiritual life; our text is another version of the old invitation, "Eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." It is both an universal announcement that the exhaustless riches of spiritual blessing are ever accessible, and an illimitable offer of a perpetual and uninterrupted participation in them.

III. IT DOES NOT ENTAIL SECLUSION FROM SOCIETY. Three things show this.

First: *Our power over circumstances is in proportion to our measure of Christian life.* In our lowest spiritual state we are the *slaves* of circumstances, but in our highest their *masters*; we proceed, step by step, from serving them to making them serve us. In our longing for elevated and continuous communion with God, then, no weariness of the bewilderment of business life need make us sigh for a "lodge in some vast wilderness," that communion being as truly within our reach amid the lawful pursuits of social life as if we were far from the sight and sound of men and their doings. As a spiritual recreation solitude is refreshing, but as a condition of life it is mischevious to the soul's health.

Secondly: *Such contact with men and things as the fulfilment of the true duties of society demands of the individual is an important part of the appointed discipline of the Christian life.*

Thirdly: *The spiritual restoration of mankind is to be effected through the connection of Christians with both God and the world*

simultaneously. The true soul has been described as having a skylight and a window, the one to receive and focalise the Divine light, the other to shed it forth into the world's gloom. There is a theory that certain veins of water found in deep mines proceed directly from the sea; they flow always alike; nothing affects them unless they are cut off. Christians should be spiritual springs always in direct communication with the Unfathomable Sea of the "water of life," sending forth the living streams in floods upon the parched waste, and transforming it to another Eden. Does it accord with the revealed will of God that the "salt of the earth" should be buried in the earth, that its savour may be preserved, or that the "light of the world" be kept concealed in order that it be kept burning. "Heaven doth with us as we with torches do, &c."

Brothers, let us strive to realise this ideal. It is to feel that "the Lord is near at hand, and not afar off,"—to be as vividly conscious of His presence as of the bodily presence of friends with whom we may converse, and to be *ever in praying mood*. Such attainment involves the possession of much of the spirituality and faith which perseveres and "endures as seeing Him who is invisible;" but it is within our reach, or God would not have beckoned us towards it.

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SAMUEL SLOCOMBE.

Variations on Themes from Scripture.

(No. XVI.)

SUBJECT: *The Service of Freedom.*

IT is in tones of winning promise and invitation that men are offered the wearing of Christ's yoke. Let all who are weary and heavy laden come to Him: come, that they may take His yoke upon them. There is a seeming paradox in the invitation. Should not the weary be invited by promised freedom from all yoke-bearing? Should not the heavy-laden be attracted by a pledge of entire immunity from burdens, grievous to be borne,

whether heavy or light? Not so. Christ's yoke is easy, but it is a yoke. The burden He imposes is light, but a burden of some sort He does impose. Being made free from sin, men become the servants—servitors, slaves even, δούλοι, of righteousness. But in so being made free from sin, and becoming servants, δούλοι, to God, they have their fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. And the yoke of privilege promised by Christ differs from the irksome bonds and rigid constraint of scribes and rabbis; a yoke which, says St. Peter, neither we nor our fathers were able to bear, inasmuch as it implies and involves a purely spiritual service—that we should serve (δουλέειν) in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”

Keble says of men, in the “Christian Year,” that,

“Freely they own, or heedless prove,
The curse of lawless hearts, the joy of self-control.”

The joy of self-control. For what Wordsworth expressively calls “unchartered freedom,” as revelled in by those who ignore a holy and happy-making law of duty, is not, in the long run, a boon, but a bane. True, that, as Cowper has it,

“’Tis liberty alone that gives the flower
Of fleeting life its lustre and perfume,
And we are weeds without it. All constraint,
Except what wisdom lays on evil men,
Is evil.”

But the constraint that sweetens liberty is excepted; the control that enfranchises from servitude to self, and exalts to a liberty which monarchs cannot grant: “’Tis liberty of heart, derived from Heaven,” “and held by charter;” “a clear escape from tyrannizing lust.” “Grace makes the slave a freeman;” for “He is the freeman whom the truth makes free, and all are slaves beside.” Byron was drawing on his own bitter experience when he wrote the lines,

“Lord of himself—that heritage of woe,
That fearful empire which the human breast
But holds to rob the heart within of rest.”

Imlac, the sage, describes, in “Rasselas” the placid flow of life enjoyed by a devout brotherhood, whose “time is regularly distributed; one duty succeeds another, so that they are not left

open to the distraction of unguided choice, nor lost in the shades of listless inactivity. There is a certain task to be performed at an appropriated hour," and the constraint is to them a pledge of happiness, hallowed as it is with a Divine sanction, and promissory of "an ampler ether, a diviner air" to come, in which they shall breathe more freely, and inhale more deeply, the breath of life.

Freedom is not the being free to do nothing, or to do just what one likes, and when, and how, without why or wherefore. *La liberté n'est pas oisiveté*, says La Bruyère; and then he proceeds to say what liberty is: "C'est le choix de travail et de l'exercice: être libre, en un mot, n'est pas ne rien faire, c'est être seul arbitre de ce qu'on fait, ou de ce qu'on ne fait point. Quel bien en ce sens que la liberté!" But how much worthier of that note of admiration the Gospel definitions, explicit or implicit, of *ce que c'est la liberté!*

There is a touching suggestiveness in what Frederick Perthes says in a letter after the death of his wife. All his doings and plannings for four and twenty years past had been solely, he declares, in reference to her. "But now all this is over. I am no longer bound; I can do what I will, and next to the yearning after her, I am most oppressed in my solitude by the consciousness of freedom." Fain would he be in those dear bonds again; to apply a passage in one of Shakespeare's minor poems, he

"in her fillet still would bide,
And, true to bondage, would not break from thence."

Or as Ferdinand says of Miranda in the "Tempest,"

"all corners else o' the earth
Let liberty make use of; space enough
Have I in such a prison."

In this sense may be applied in earnest what Butler writes in sport, of an independent spirit who

"Disdains control, and yet can be
Nowhere, but in a prison, free."

So the sculptor in Hawthorne's tale of "Transformation," intent on winning winsome Hilda for his own, "would try if it were possible to take this shy, yet frank and innocently fearless creature captive, and imprison her in his heart, and make her

sensible of a larger freedom there than in all the world besides." "I have read somewhere," says a simple maiden in one of Lord Lytton's fictions, "that the slave is gay in his holiday from toil ; if you free him, the gaiety vanishes, and he cares no more for the dance under the palm tree." Don Alphonse, in Madame de Rémusat's "Lettres Espagnoles," writes to his sister an account of the courtiers' embarrassment on being released by the king from ceremonial attendance, and allowed to do each one as he liked. "L'improvisation en tout est chose assez difficile, et particulièrement celle de la liberté. Il faut que je confesse que nous n'avons su que faire de la nôtre." The moral of the fable may be read in Landor's lines, supposed to be indited by the caged nightingales so tenderly tended by Agapenthe, and brought to Athens for her from Thessaly, and who bid the reader think not—

"That we would gladly fly again
To gloomy wood or windy plain.
Certain we are we ne'er should find
A care so provident, so kind. . . .
O may you prove, as well as we,
That even in Athens there may be
A sweeter thing than liberty."

Apply, again, to the general subject the special fact, by way of illustration, that restrictions and shackles are essential to rhythmic writing, and voluntary thralldom the natural condition of poetry. The Chevalier de la Faye, in his "Apology" for the supposed difficulties of rhyme in our Cisalpine dialects (one Italian poet being "distinguishable among his fellow-captives by the light aerial nature of his fetters,") suggests an ingenious parallel to the *jets d'eau* that ornament the gardens of the Tuileries, Versailles, and St. Cloud, in a copy of verses which have been thus Englished by Father Prout :—

"From the rhyme's restrictive rigour
Thought derives its impulse oft,
Genius draws new strength and vigour,
Fancy springs and shoots aloft.
So, in leaden conduits pent,
Mounts the liquid element,
By pressure forced to climb :
And he who feared the rule's restraint
Finds but a friendly ministrant
In Reason's helpmate, Rhyme."

Pithy and pertinent too are Mr. Coventry Patmore's lines on those who

"live by law, not like the fool,
But like the bard, who freely sings
In strictest bonds of rhyme and rule,
And finds in them, not bonds, but wings."

They who so live are in every sense the happier, without an "except these bonds," but because of them. They find in them not bonds, but wings; and thenceforth have free course, and go on their way rejoicing. They, like the repentant rebels in Shakespeare's "King John," and by the same river metaphor,

"Leaving their rankness and irregular course,
Stoop low within those bounds they had o'erlook'd,
And calmly run on in obedience."

What they are no longer free to do, is to do ill. And that freedom is as perfect servitude as the service of God is perfect freedom. In fine, and in the words (but expanding the meaning) of one of Samuel Butler's metrical reflections:—

"Law does not put the least restraint
Upon our freedom, but maintain't;
Or if it does, 'tis for our good,
To give us fiercer latitude;
For wholesome laws preserve us free
By stinting of our liberty."

FRANCIS JACOX, B.A.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

THE END OF THE YEAR: THE
IMPARTIALITY OF PROVIDENCE.

"All things come alike to all."
—Eccles. ix. 2.

WE have reached the last month of another year, the last hour of that month will soon strike, and 1869 will be gone,—irreclaimably and for

ever. The history of this year, like that of all its predecessors, declares with a thousand voices the *apparent* disregard of God's providence to the moral distinctions of mankind: "All things *seem* to come alike to all." The same outward events transpire in the history of the

"righteous" and the "wicked." The paragraph of which the text is an extract, is supposed to be the language which Solomon puts into the lips of a man, who objects to that wise and righteous course of life which he had been recommending in the preceding chapters. It means, of what service is a religious life to man since Providence treats all men alike?" All things come alike to all." I offer two remarks upon this statement.

I. IT IS PHENOMENALLY TRUE. To all outward appearance the good and the bad are treated alike. From the manner in which they are treated, it is impossible to ascertain who is the good man and who is the bad; or to use the language of the clause preceding the text, "No man knoweth either love or hatred, by all that is before them." All are subject to the same diseases, bereavements, disappointments, all go down to the grave alike. First: *This is a perplexing fact.* Antecedently one might have supposed that the God of holiness and rectitude would, in his providence, have treated men according to their moral character, that happiness and misery would be measured out according to the merits and demerits of mankind. But the fact is otherwise, and this fact is perplexing, and ever has been so. Job exclaimed, "Wherefore do the wicked live

to become old; yea, are mighty in power," &c., &c. Asaph seemed confounded by it,— "As for me, my feet were almost gone, my steps had well nigh slipped," &c. And thousands in all ages have said, "It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept this ordinance?" Secondly: *This fact is significant.* It shows (1) The unalterableness of God's laws. Man's material health, prosperity, and happiness, depend upon the attention he pays to the natural laws of the world. Be he ever so holy, if he neglects those, he will suffer. Be he ever so wicked, if he regards those, he will have more or less enjoyment. Natural laws pay no deference to moral character. It shows (2) The high probability of a future state. Though I am far enough from believing that a godly life here, with all its sufferings, has not an advantage over a wicked life even in its prosperity, I cannot believe that the system of things under which men live on this earth, is complete and final. Even the life of virtue here is scarcely worth having, if no future awaits us. The other remark which I offer upon this statement is that—

II. IT IS SPIRITUALLY FALSE. It is only in *appearance*, not in *reality*, that "all things come alike to all." First: *They do not come in the same character.* The same things have a different character to men

animated by different dispositions. To the wicked the trials and afflictions of earth are either blind casualties, or penal inflictions. But to the godly they are chastisements of fatherly love. To the wicked the prosperity and enjoyment appear as the results of their own skill, industry, and merit. To the godly they appear as the unmerited favours of a merciful God. Secondly: *They do not come with the same influence.* Trials chafe and irritate the spirit of the wicked; they chasten and purify the godly. Prosperity feeds the vanity and ambition of the wicked; but inspires the godly with devout humility and holy gratitude. Tribulations which carry agony and confusion to the soul of the wicked are gloried in by the godly, "We glory in tribulation," &c. "All things work together for good to them that love God," &c. The same soils, dews, and sunbeams that fill the hemlock with poison, fill the wheat with food for nations. And the same events which transform some men into devils, transfigure others into seraphs.

CONCLUSION. — All things only "come alike to all" in appearance. They are essentially different to different characters.

CHRISTMAS : CHRIST'S ADVENT.

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."—Luke xix. 10.

CHRISTMAS-DAY is a day which commemorates the greatest fact in the history of our race—the fact that Christ came into it. There are many wonderful facts in human history, but none approaching this in significance, glory, and influence. The history relating to Zaccheus, with which the text stands connected, is too fertile with suggestions to justify a mere passing remark, and our text requires far more space than our limits will allow. Hence we pass to it at once. It leads us to offer two remarks concerning the advent of Christ.

I. It was the advent of A MAN.—He is called here the "Son of man." This was the title He frequently gave Himself. "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" "The Son of man hath no where to lay his head." "Ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power," &c. This was His own self-chosen title, and a glorious title too. (1.) He was "the Son of man," not the son of a *tribe*. Every human tribe has some idiosyncrasy which tends to separate it from other tribes. But in His nature there were no such angularities. (2.) He was "the Son of man," not the son of a *nation*. Nations have peculiarities that tend

to separate them from one another. There was nothing national in Christ. (3.) He was "the Son of man," not the son of a *sect*. Sects have often peculiarities that not only mark them from each other, but set them in mutual antagonism. Christ had no denominational crotchets. He was "the Son of man," the genuine offspring of the human race, the divine idea of man fully realized. The great archetypal man was He, before whom all distinctions of race, country, age, civilizations, and religions shadow into obscurity. Thank God, that He came as a MAN, a genuine man, with a man's heart, a man's excellencies, and with man's infirmities. "The world was made flesh and dwelt among us." Another remark which the text suggests is—

II. It was the advent of a man to LOST MEN. "He came to seek and to save the lost." Men are lost. What is meant by this? It does not mean that God knows not where they are. They are not to God like the lost silver to the woman, the lost sheep to the shepherd, the lost soul to the father, beyond His ken. God knows all about men, the worst as well as the best. Nor does it mean that they are lost in the sense that God cannot make use of them. Even the worst of them He uses as instruments to carry on His government in the world.

"He maketh the wrath of man to praise him." He rides upon the billows. He makes the most furious, hostile winds and waves fill the sails of His plans and bear the ship of His providence on to its glorious destination. What then is meant by their being lost? They are lost in the sense of not fulfilling the purpose for which they were created. The clock is lost as a clock that has become incapable of marking the flight of time; all the machinery is there but the clock is gone. The ship is lost that has become incapable of ploughing the ocean; its bulk may stand before you, but the ship has gone. The organ is lost that is become incapable of pouring forth music. It may stand in the cathedral and look as well as as ever, but it is lost as an organ. Man is lost in this sense. Man was made to love his Maker supremely, but he has ceased to do so. Man was made to render his race an unselfish service, but he has ceased to do so. Man was made to move in harmony with the moral universe, but he has ceased to do so. There is the corporeal frame, there is the mental economy, but the man is lost.

III. It was the advent of a man to lost men in order to SAVE THEM. First: *Christ seeks the lost*. He does not merely receive sinners when they come to Him, but He searches them

out. When on earth He went about doing good. Secondly: *He saves the lost.* Saves them! How? By enabling them to fulfil the grand purpose of their being; love their Maker, serve their race, and act in harmony with the moral constitution of the universe.

SINNERS, LIVING AND DEAD.

"For a living dog is better than a dead lion."—Eccles. ix. 4.

THE idea contained in this somewhat strange utterance, and that which no doubt Solomon intended to convey, is the advantage which a living sinner, however small and contemptible he may be, has over a sinner that is dead, however noble he might have been in nature and circumstances. Three remarks are suggested,

I. That some sinners ARE MORE CONTEMPTIBLE THAN OTHERS. The dog to an Oriental mind, and especially to the Hebrew, was an object of disgust. All sinners are contemptible because they are sinners, but they are not all equally so. There is as much difference between some and others as there is between the "dog" and the "lion." First: *Some sinners are baser in nature than others.* There are some who are constitutionally low, and mean, and sordid—like the dog, always greedy and snarling. or there are others who have high, natural endowments—

men of inborn courage, lofty genius, noble presence, rich, social natures. There are "dogs" and lions found in the ranks of sinners. Paul met with men whom he regarded as "dogs," and fought with others at Ephesus whom he regarded as "beasts." Secondly: *Some sinners are in baser circumstances than others.* Some tenant the hovels of pauperism and destitution, others dwell in palaces and sit on thrones. Some wear the wretched appearance of starving curs, others the majestic bearing of lions.

II. That the least contemptible of sinners MUST DIE. There is the "dead lion." The sinner, however noble in nature, must die. Though he possesses the strength of a Samson, the courage of a Napoleon, the imagination of a Byron, he must die. However noble in circumstances, he must die. The wealth of a whole country may be in his possession—an empire may be at his feet, and triumphant armies may guard his throne still—he must die. "There is no discharge in that warfare." Death to the sinner is a terrible thing. First: *It detaches him from all good.* Secondly: *It connects him with all evil.*

III. The most contemptible sinner whilst living, HAS AN ADVANTAGE over the least contemptible who is dead. The "living dog is better

than the dead lion." The vilest, meanest, most wretched sinner on the face of this earth this day, is better off than all the millionaires and princes of the earth that have died in their sins. Why? First: *He is living in a world fitted for happiness.* Everything in the natural world is intended and suited to minister pleasure to man. Nature pours forth happiness on him from ten thousand sources. Contrast the world of departed sinners with this. Secondly: *He is living in the sphere of re-*

demptive mercy. So long as he is on earth, he may obtain a change of heart, forgiveness of sins, and peace with God. "Whilst the lamp holds out to burn the vilest sinner may return." But departed sinners are in the world of retribution, with them the day of grace is over.

CONCLUSION.—"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCXLI.)

CONSCIENCE.

"The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly."—Prov. xx. 27.

By the *spirit* here I understand not the intellectual but the moral mind of man—the conscience. That which Byron calls "the oracle of God," and Coleridge "the pulse of reason;" but that which I regard as the very heart of humanity, that without which we may be thinking animals, but not men. Conscience is not an attribute of man, but the substratum, not a branch, but the root from which all the branches of his being

spring.* The text leads us to make two remarks about this conscience.

I. It is a DIVINE LIGHT IN MAN. The celebrated Culverwell has written a masterly treatise on this Divine lamp within us. Conscience has been well called "God's viceroy in the soul." It is to God what the moon is to the sun reflecting his beams. Concerning this inner light, two things should be noted. First: *It is clouded.* Whilst it is in

* "For remarks on conscience, see HOMILIST, vol. iii., second series, pp. 488 and 535. See also vol. ii., first series, p. 227.

every man, it is in most men encircled with such a dense atmosphere of carnality, selfishness and sin, that its beams are scarcely seen. It is like the moon in an eclipse. It is there in its own grand orbit, but the earth has come between it and the great central orb. Secondly: *It is inextinguishable.* Though sin has clouded it so that it is all but hidden it cannot be extinguished. Hell's hurricanes, through a thousand centuries, have failed to extinguish one conscience. The lunar orb may be eclipsed, but it remains intact, holds its own orbit, and retains unaltered its relation to the eternal sun.

II. It is a SELF-REVEALING LIGHT. "Searching all the inward parts of the belly." The word belly here stands for the inmost depths of the soul, and the idea is, that conscience is a light that pours its beams into the central depths of our being. So it does. It reveals to us our *motives*. Motives are the springs that set the whole of our machinery at work, and conscience concerns itself with these, sheds light upon the rightness and the wrongness of motives. In this way. First: *It reveals the responsibility of actions.* It is that power in us that shatters all the arguments of the intellect against our accountability. It holds us responsible for our likings and dislikes, for our affinities and antipathies. Secondly: *It reveals the moral character of actions.* Under its light, man can have no doubt as to what action is right, and what action is wrong. "When the gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto

themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also-bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another."

CONCLUSION.—Let every man look well to his inner light. It is the divinity within him. Though it cannot be quenched, it may be so enrapt with the clouds of sin as to obscure its light. To go on in life with a darkened conscience, is to walk a road, of malignant foes and terrific precipices." Everyone that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reproved."

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(No. CCXLII.)

THE GLORY OF GODLINESS BOTH IN YOUTH AND AGE.

"The glory of young men is their strength; and the beauty of old men is the grey head."—Prov. xx. 29.

NEITHER of these clauses can be accepted without a qualification. There is no glory in the "strength" of a young man, muscular or mental, if that strength is wrongly inspired and directed. Nor is there any "beauty" connected with the grey head if the old man has spent his years in debauchery and vice. Indeed, a dissolute old man is one of the most unbeautiful and hideous objects on which the eye can rest. Attach godliness to the strength of the young and to the grey head of the old, and then both clauses are full of truth.

I. GODLINESS IN YOUTH MAKES STRENGTH GLORIOUS.—Strength is one of the choicest gifts of our being. Muscular strength is a good thing, mental strength is a better thing: moral strength—strength to brave the

wrong and do the right—is the best of all. But why is strength in a godly youth a glorious thing? First: *Because it is inspired by a glorious spirit.* It is the spirit of love, unselfish and devout. Of all the objects in the universe, love is the most loveable. It is the glory of God Himself. Take from God His love, and you will strip Him of His glory. Secondly: *Because it is directed to a glorious object.* What is the object to which it is directed? The destroying of the dark empire of ignorance, sin, and misery, and the establishment of the empire of intelligence, virtue, and blessedness. Truly the glory of such young men is in their strength.

II. GODLINESS IN AGE MAKES THE GREY HEAD LOVELY.—In the preceding chapter it is said, “The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.*” There are three things in a truly godly old man which gives beauty to his grey head. First: *Affluent experience.* He has travelled the winding path of life almost to its end, and can tell many a useful and inspiring anecdote of defeats and triumphs, of sorrows and joys, of hopes and disappointments, of gains and losses. The experience of a human life devoted to the true and the good is of all the valuable things on this earth the most valuable. Secondly: *Melowness of character.* The fruitful tree is beautiful in all seasons; beautiful in the buddings and blossoms of early spring; beautiful in the opening summer, with the unripened fruit cluster-

ing on its branches; but never so beautiful as when autumn has given the bloom of ripeness to the rich produce of its strength. How glorious is a human character ripe for heaven! Thirdly: *Calm waiting.* The work is done. Did man ever appear more beautiful than “Paul the aged” when he exclaimed, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course,” &c. Who does not see beauty in such a character? “Verily thou shalt rise up before the hoary and the honourable old men.”

CONCLUSION. — Youth and age may be both beautiful and glorious in their own way and measure. Indeed, there must be a something common to both to make them beautiful. Cicero says, “As I approve of the youth that has something of the old man in him, so I am no less pleased with an old man who has something of the youth.” The godly old man has much in him of the freshness of youth, and the godly youth possesses not a little of the gravity of age.

(No. CCXLIII.)

GOD’S DISCIPLINE OF HIS CHILDREN.

“The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil; so do stripes the inward parts of the belly.”—Prov. xx. 30.

“It is not easy,” says Dr. Wardle, “to attach a definite meaning to these words. Suppose with some the blueness of a wound to be a symptom of its healing, what comparison can there be between a mere *symptom* or *indication* of healing and the *severity* of chastisement or discipline? Suppose, with others,

* See HOMILIST, vol. i., fourth series, on this text.

the *blueness* or *lividness* of the wound to be the effect or mark of its severity; then, properly speaking, there can hardly be a comparison between the effects, whatever they are conceived to be, of severe wounds and severe stripes, they are so nearly one and the same thing. I know not indeed how the original word came to be rendered "*blueness*." The one word as well as the other is given in lexicons as signifying, among other meanings, *a wound*. But *the wounds of a wound*" would of course be inamissible. The following translation has been given by one critic of eminence—"The bruises or contusions of a blow are a cleanser to the wicked man, and stripes cleanse the inward parts of the belly." But this is liable to the same objection with the last-mentioned view, namely: that the two things in the comparison are too nearly the same: for what difference is there between the contusions of a blow cleansing the wicked, and "stripes cleansing the inward parts of the belly?" The idea in either case is almost, if not altogether, *identical*. The following translation has been suggested, "Surely the compression of a wound cleanseth away evil, and so do stripes the inward parts of the belly." The radical meaning of the word here translated *blueness*, means to unite, to join together. The pressing of a wound is often necessary, in order to cleanse it of that purulent and peccant humour, which prevents its healing." The passage thus explained presents two thoughts concerning God's discipline of His children.

I. IT IS SOMETIMES SEVERE. It is as the compression of the wound. The squeezing of a

wound in order to extract the virus is sometimes agonizing, yet it must be done. How painful often are God's dispensations with His people. Sometimes He takes from them the most *loved ones*, husband, wife, children, parents. Sometimes their *property*. He brings them from opulence to poverty. Sometimes their *health*. He sends diseases into their bodies to render existence all but intolerable. How severely did He try Abraham, and Job, and Daniel, and Paul! There is so much dross in the gold that it requires the furnace to purify it. So many worthless branches wasting the life of the tree that it requires the pruning knife to lop them off. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."

II. IT IS SOMETIMES USEFUL. "So do stripes the inward parts of the belly." The idea is that as the compression of the wound presses out the humour that prevents the healing, so providential discipline tends to the good of our inmost soul. Trials are useful to spiritual character in many ways. First: *They lead to serious thoughtfulness*. Secondly: *They weaken our affections for earth*. Thirdly: *They deepen our sense of dependence on God*. "Though no affliction at present is joyous, but grievous, it, nevertheless, yieldeth the peaceful fruits of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby." "Trials," says Frederick Robertson, "bring man face to face with God—God and He touch; and the flimsy veil of bright cloud that hung between him and the sky is blown away; he feels that he is standing outside the

earth with nothing between him and the Eternal Infinite. Oh! there is something in the sick-bed, and the aching heart, and the restlessness, and the languor of shattered health, and the sorrow of affections

withered, and the stream of life poisoned at its fountain, and the cold lonely feeling of utter rawness of heart which is felt when God strikes home in earnest that forces a man to feel what is real and what is not."

NOTICE TO OUR READERS.

WE greatly regret that in consequence of the improvements contemplated in "the Editor's Series of the Homilist" to appear in January, several articles are excluded from the present number, such as Biblical Criticism; Pulpit and its Handmaids; Notes on New Books; and Literary Notices. The following are the books now on our table standing for the next number:—*The Hero of the Desert; or Facts more wonderful than Fiction.* By Rev. James Spong. Second Edition. London: The Book Society, 28, Paternoster Row.—*Clinical Lectures.* With observations of Practical Medicine. By Sir Henry Marsh, M.D., M.R.T.A. Edited by J. S. Hughes, M.D., F.R.C.S.I. Dublin: Moffat and Co.—*Modern Christian Heroes.* A Gallery of Protesting and Reforming Men. By Rev. George Gilfillan. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.—*Redemption Thoughts.* A Poem in nine Cantos. Together with a few Poems written in early life. By N. Niven. Dublin: Moffat & Co.—*Anecdotes of the Wesleys.* By Rev J. B. Wakeley. With an introduction. By Rev. J. McLintock, D.D., L.L.D. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.—*Heirs of the Soil.* By Mrs. Lorenzo N. Nunn. Dublin: Moffat & Co.—*Poems* By Thornton Wells. London: Longmans & Green.—*A Metrical Study of the Book of Job.* By Henry John Marten. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.—*Sacred Lyrics.* Hymns Original and Translated from the German. By John Guthrie, M.A. Second Edition. London: James Nisbet & Co., 21, Berners Street.—*Words of Comfort for Parents Bereaved of Little Children.* Edited by William Logan. London: James Nisbet & Co.—*The Prophecies of our Lord and His Apostles.* A Series of Discourses. By W. Hoffman, D.D. Translated, with the sanction of the Author, by Maurice J. Evans, B.A. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster-row.—*Sermons.* Preached in Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, New York. By Henry Ward Beecher. London: Richard Dickinson.—*Christian Faith.* Five Sermons preached before the University of Cambridge. By William Saumarez Smith, M.A. London: Macmillan and Co.—*An Introduction to the New Testament.* By Friedrich Bleek. Edited by Johannes Friedrich Bleek Pfarrer. Translated from the German of the Second Edition by Rev. William Urwick, M.A. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 38, George-street.—*An Introduction to the Old Testament.* By Keil. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.—*The Christian Life Manifest and One.* Six Sermons preached in Peterborough Cathedral. By Brooke Foss Westcott, B.D., Canon. London and Cambridge: Macmillan and Co.—*Alfred the Great.* By Thomas Hughes. Two Parts. London: Macmillan.—*The Mother's Friend.* Vol. I. of New Series. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster-row.—*A Group of Six Sermons.* By Thomas T. Lynch. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row.—*The Ecumenical Council.* What is our Interest in It? A Summary of

Facts with Suggestions of Duty, in a Lecture delivered in Brixton Hill. By Rev. D. Jones, B.A. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.—*The Contests for the Progress of Truth during the Present Century.* A Discourse by Rev. Robert Ainslie, of Brighton. London: Longman and Co.—*Missionary Theology.* By Edward White. London: Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row.—*The Criterion of Christian Life.*—A Sermon by Rev. F. Fox Thomas, of Harrogate. Harrogate: Thomas Hollins.—*The Sunday School World.* Edited by James Comper Gray. London: Elliot Stock.—*Correspondence on the Barron Drainage.* Edited by Richard Warburton, D.L. Dublin: Moffat and Company.—*Judgment of the Press of the United Kingdom, of America, and Continent of Europe, upon a Subject of Great Importance.* Manchester: J. Kirby, 3, Broom Street, Market Street. *The Organization of Sunday Schools.* By James Collinge, Esq. Manchester: John Heywood, 141, Deane's Gate.—*The Warrior's Prayer.* A Farewell Sermon. By F. D. Maurice. London: Macmillan and Co.—*City Temple.* By Joseph Parker, D.D. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.—*Plain Words.* By Rev. Hamilton Magee, Dublin. Dublin: Moffat and Co.—*Ireland under the Church Act.* By Robert Knox, D.D. N. Moffatt and Co.—*Concerning Earthly Love, &c.* By a Country Parson. Dublin: Moffat and Co.—*The Nation's Loss and the Nation's Crisis.* By L. Bevan, LL.B. London: H. K. Lewis, 136, Gower Street.—*The Name of Christ.* London: F. Bowyer Kitto, Bishopsgate Street.—*Apostolic Ordination.* By F. G. D. London: E. Marlborough and Co., 4, Ave Maria Lane.—*The Momentous Question. Who shall Live for Ever?* By William Morris. London: Elliott Stock.—*The Resurrection.* By William Morris. London: Elliott Stock.—*Education.* By William Warburton, D.D. Dublin: Moffat and Co.

We beg here to call the especial attention of our readers to the following notice:—

Although nearly One Hundred Thousand Volumes of the HOMILIST have been sold, the demand for the work is as great as ever, and, consequently, a new series starts on January, 1870. Whether the last or not, under the present editorship, it will certainly be the BEST. In no former series had the Editor so much time to devote to the work, so many first-class Homiletical thinkers at his service, and, through the advance of Biblical scholarship, so affluent a store of sacred learning available to his use.

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